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BEIJING YOUTH DAILY



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Magic just a fad?

Since Liu Qian took the stage at this year's New Year's Gala, China has been dazzled by magic. Once a branch of acrobatics, magic is poised to enter the mainstream. The attention is encouraging for magicians, many of whom have remained in obscurity thanks to audiences who did not respect their art. But insiders warn magic's honeymoon may not last, because no market can survive with only one or two idols.

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Charity in hot water for ad agency's large cut of funds

By Jin Zhu

Ningbo Anti-cancer Health Foundation, a folk charity organization in Zhejiang, has fallen from grace in the two years since it opened. Once lauded as the country's "first local public cancer foundation," today is scorned for channeling half of its income into an advertising agency.

Xu Jun, a 23-year-old Zhejiang woman with leukemia, went to the foundation for aid since her family could not bear the expense of her treatment. Late last year, Xu was granted 2,000 yuan by the foundation.

However, in March she learned from the local government the foundation had collected 100,000 yuan in donations using her name.

"It was astonishing for us. I wondered where the rest of the money went," Xu's mother told China Youth Daily.

Faced with questions about the money, the foundation provided Xu with an invoice for expenses incurred during the donation drive. According to the invoice, the funds were donated to the whole foundation rather than a special fund for Xu.

After negotiations, Xu was granted an additional 10,000 yuan.

Du Xuechu, executive director of the foundation, said the foundation has to collect donations from local enterprises by itself

since it is not affiliated with the government.

"It is a lot of trouble: to secure a donation of 200 to 300 yuan may require several visits from one of our representatives. When we hold a donation drive, the funds we bring in barely cover the cost of the activity," Du said.

Advertising agencies often have connections which allow them to host such events for far less money. That was why the foundation initially decided to cooperate with a local agency in 2007, paying it a 35 to 45 percent cut of the raised funds.

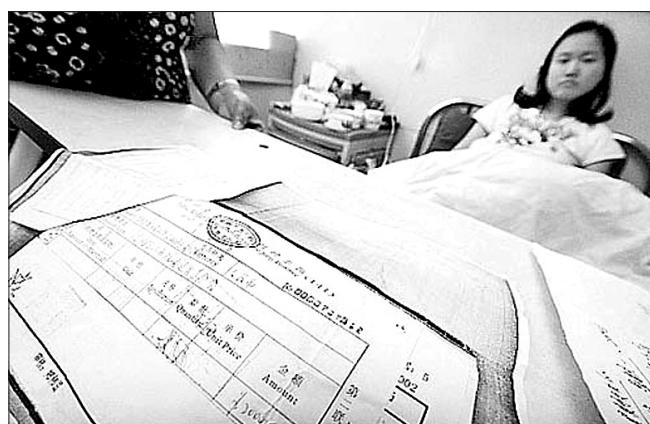
"Although there is no precedent for charities to team up with ad agencies in China, we learned from the experience of foundations in other countries," he said.

Du said the cooperation has brought notable results. According to the statistics from the foundation, it has contributed 3.23 million yuan to 2,462 people over the last two years.

But the cooperation took on a darker tone when inquiries began into why the advertisers claimed such a large cut of the donations.

According to an annual report issued by the Ningbo Municipal Health Bureau last year, the foundation spent just 306,000 yuan on public welfare – about 13.1 percent of its income of 2.33 million yuan.

"In the US, many foundations do use professional fund raisers



Many companies donated for Xu Jun's treatment, but she saw little of money.

Photo provided by China Youth Daily

to help bring in money. But their cut is usually between 10 to 30 percent. A rate as high as 45 percent is ridiculous," Deng Guosheng, a deputy professor of foundation studies at Tsinghua University, said.

In the country's "Regulations for the Management of Foundations", a charitable foundation must spend 70 percent of its total income on public welfare. A far cry from the foundation's 13.1 percent.

The annual report concluded that because of the shortfall, the foundation could not be described as working for the public welfare and helping cancer patients.

The foundation was ordered to stop raising funds by the Civil

Affair Department of Zhejiang Province this week.

There are nearly 80 folk charity organizations in Zhejiang Province, most of which face similar fundraising problems.

"These organizations do not have the full-time staff needed to raise funds. They usually spend a great deal of time appeasing a public skeptical of their actual charitably – especially when their activities become so commercial," Deng Guosheng said.

In this case, the foundation would have been better off pursuing community-level organization on its own, by helping to take care of children or participating in volunteer programs to attract donations to its cause, he said.

Wedding photos forbidden in historic parks

By Wang Dong

Newlyweds will no longer be allowed to use historic parks and sites like the Summer Palace as a backdrop for their wedding photos.

The Beijing Municipal Administration Center of Parks announced on August 3 that it will ban wedding studios from using the capital's historic parks, including the Summer Palace, Temple of Heaven, Beihai Park and Jingshan Park, while other city-level parks like Purple Bamboo Park and Taoranting Park will charge for permission to shoot.

"More and more people like to shoot their wedding photos at some historic parks, and there are no regulations preventing this," a worker in the center's publicity department surnamed Wang said. She said the ban is intended to protect cultural relics and the landscape, and to maintain a nice environment for park visitors.

"Ninety percent of wedding photo studios leave the park a mess, according to my experience," she said.

However, the center has yet to issue official regulations, Wang said. She refused to say when the new rule is due or how much the parks will charge photography studios.

"We already refuse wedding photography studios in our park," said a worker from Tiantan Park. "Those who want to shoot wedding photos must receive approval from the city's relic



Parks are a popular destination for new couples seeking a nice backdrop for their wedding photos.

CFP Photo

management authorities."

She said many photographers step on the grass while shooting and destroy the plants, some of which are expensive species imported from abroad.

"Customers must pay the park entrance fee on their own," Yang Hua, a consultant with Beijing Balichuntian Bridal Photos, said. "Any extra fees charged by the park will be passed on to the couple."

Her studio charges between 2,000 yuan and 20,000 yuan for wedding photo services. The

extra fees may push the price even higher.

The studio has contracts with several parks that allows them to take wedding photos, Yang said. Chaoyang Park, for example, charges 200 yuan per couple in addition to its 5 yuan admission. Beijing World Park also charges 200 yuan for wedding photographers, compared with the normal entrance fee of 65 yuan.

"I think couples should have the right to shoot their wedding photos in any park," said Chen

Pei, a bride who is getting married soon.

She said that people taking wedding photos were no different than other park visitors and should not be charged.

"I would rather choose somewhere else to take my wedding photos," Chen said.

Liu Wen, a park visitor, said the parks should set up special zones rather than completely ban wedding photography.

"It would benefit both parties," he said.

Employment situation remains grave

The employment situation is still grave despite signs of recovery in the first half of this year, Wang Yadong, an official at the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, said Tuesday.

He said at a press conference in Beijing that the risk of mass unemployment looms as the global financial crisis has not yet bottomed out.

In response to questions about migrant worker employment, Wang said 95 percent of the 70 million migrant workers stuck at home after Spring Festival have returned to work.

The remaining 5 percent have work in their hometowns or started a business there, he said.

Some 18 million migrant workers went home jobless before Spring Festival as the financial crisis had forced the closure of many coastal factories, Wang said.

The figure, based on a survey conducted by the ministry and the National Bureau of Statistics during Spring Festival, has been reduced from the 20 million first reported by Chen Xiwen, director of the office of the central leading group on rural work, in February.

Wang said 50 percent of all migrant workers, 70 million people, returned home before Spring Festival to spend time with their families. The country had 225 million farmers-turned-workers at the end of last year, 140 million of whom worked outside their hometown.

Wang added 10 million to this figure to account for new farmers who went to seek work during the first six months of the year.

He said only 3 percent of migrant workers in cities were struggling to find work as of the end of June, painting a rather rosy picture of their employment situation.

An additional 3 million college graduates still need jobs, he said. This includes 32 percent of this year's 6.1 million graduates as well as those who have remained jobless since graduating last year.

There were signs of recovery in the first half of the year, as the registered unemployment rate in urban areas remained at 4.3 percent at the end of June. Unemployment has not changed since March, though it rose from 4.2 percent at the end of 2008.

The number of urban residents registered as unemployed was 9.06 million as of June 30, down 90,000 from the end of the first quarter.

The government is continuing efforts to reduce employment during the second half of this year trying to keep the urban registered unemployment rate below 4.6 percent, the target set at the beginning of this year, Wang said.

(Xinhua)

Campers show bruises after teen internet addict slain

By Han Manman

Half of an Internet addiction camp's teens were found with bruises after the alleged beating to death of a teenager by counselors at an Internet addiction rehabilitation clinic in Nanning prompted an investigation.

A camp counselor surnamed Xia said half of the teens had been picked up by their parents and the camp will not receive new campers this year. She refused to comment on the child's death and said the case is under police investigation.

Xinhua reported that many campers had visible bruises on their bodies. The campers told reporters that the bruises were inflicted by camp counselors. One 14-year-old boy surnamed Pan had been at camp for 10 days: his buttocks were completely purple.

Several visible injuries were found on the dead teen's body. Medical records showed that the boy's heart had stopped before he was taken to the hospital. Four

counselors have been detained by police since the beating.

The 16-year-old boy Deng Senshan was sent to Nanning Qihuang Survival Training Camp last Saturday afternoon to cure him of his Internet addiction, "to shake bad habits, regain his confidence and develop a positive attitude toward life," according to the applicant filed by Deng's parents when he was left at the camp.

Deng's parents paid 7,000 yuan for him to spend a month at camp.

"The center is authorized to take necessary steps, including punishment, to educate the child. These steps will not result in abusing the child or impairing his health," the camp's contract, signed by all parents, said.

Deng ended up in solitary confinement shortly after arriving at the camp, and was subsequently beaten to death by the counselors for "running too slowly," Nanning media reported.

He was pronounced dead at 3



Deng's son was beaten to death at camp.

Photo provided by Shanghai Morning Post

am Sunday.

His death spurred new calls from experts for the government to regulate Internet addiction treatment programs.

"The market for Internet addiction treatment in China is a mess because no one has defined

how the addiction should be diagnosed or what treatment is appropriate," said Tao Ran, director of the country's first Internet addiction clinic under Beijing Military General Hospital.

"The boy's death was not accidental. Most rehab camps use

military training tactics, but many teenage 'net addicts cannot keep pace. It always comes down to conflicts and violence. A similar case happened two years ago in Chongqing," Tao said.

Many parents blindly trust these camps and believe their children can be totally "cured" as long as they are sent to the camp, Tao said.

He suggested ministries of health and education work together to regulate a prevention and treatment regimen for Internet addiction.

China has 320 million Internet users. As many as 10 million of the country's 100 million teenage Internet users are considered addicted. The lax definition of the addiction or how to treat it has given rise to some 300 organizations using their own treatment methods.

Last month, the government stepped in to ban the use of electroshock in treating Internet addiction.

Professor blogs to bust corrupt officials



By Ma Mingxuan

Wang Peirong, a mechanics professor at China University of Mining and Technology, has been fighting corruption online for eight years. But unlike many others, Wang calls out corruption without hiding behind a pseudonym: something that has led many to track him down for help – or for vengeance.

At the beginning of the year, Wang received a letter from Ren Guihua in Beijing, who told him about her licentious husband Wang Haiyang's long-term extra-marital affair and his receiving bribes.

After investigating Ren's claims, Wang Peirong broke the story on his blog on May 16, which caught the attention of the Discipline Inspection Commission.

By July 7, 2009, Wang Haiyang, vice secretary of Agricultural Industries Council of Huairou District of Beijing, had been suspended from his duties pending further investigation. While guanxi may prevent Wang Haiyang from facing any real punishment, Wang Peirong said he is glad his blog may topple another tainted official.

His battles with corruption began in 2001, when Wang Peirong moved to a new apartment and found its front door would not shut. He quickly learned that all his neighbors

had the same problem. Having reported the problem and receiving no reply, Wang learned the door manufacturer was connected to the local police station.

Wang spent four years collecting evidence before publishing the story online.

Once on the Internet, the case found a fiery audience. Wang realized the power of the mob was far more able to effect change than direct reporting through the "proper" channels, and so he turned to the blog format to expose China's most corrupt officials.

In August 2008, Dong Feng, party secretary of Quanshan District in Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province, was fired and arrested after Wang posted about Dong's dozens of extra-marital affairs and acceptance of illicit money.

But Dong had friends in high places that pressured the university to send Wang on a forced sabbatical. He was allowed back to the lectern only after Dong had been tried and thoroughly dishonored.

He has also been attacked repeatedly during his years of exposing corruption – even by the people who tipped him off.

In mid-July, Wang was assaulted by Yin, an informant who refused to admit she had revealed anything to Wang.

"I am used to being attacked from time to time, but I don't let



Last time he published evidence of official corruption.

it get in the way of my reporting corruption and abuses of power," Wang said with a confident smile.

At least three cases exposed by Wang remain unsolved, though he said he expects a result soon. "I don't want to be a mouthpiece for calling out these officials. I want to lead the public to stand up and expose corruption on its own."

Wang said the work and life of officials plays a crucial role in leading social mores. When officials are respectable, the public is more likely to emulate their example.

According to early reports, officials will be required to make their assets a matter of public record at the Fourth Plenum of the 17th CPC Central Committee next month. Wang said he is encouraged by the central government's apparent willingness to take on the problem of corruption.

Magic destined to vanish?

By Han Manman

The list of this year's media buzz words is sure to include "magic," which has been around in one form or another for hundreds of years but never received any attention until this January.

During CCTV's 2009 Spring Festival Gala, Taiwanese magician Liu Qian wowed millions of viewers with his performance. This month, Chinese magic got a second spark when Beijing hosted the World Championships of Magic.

Magic shows are getting more air time as young people try to learn a few tricks to impress their friends and dates.

But many worry the boom is just a fad. Without a mature market chain, how long can any art last with only one or two idols?

Abracadabra

Without Liu Qian and the world championships, professional magician Xu Qiu may have gone a lifetime unnoticed – even though she is one of the most decorated stage magicians.

As the fourth successor to her family's craft, Xu fulfilled her parents' dream for her to become a magician. She took to the stage at age 12 and has worked in magic for the 30 years since.

"Domestic audiences have traditionally been less interested in local magicians," said Xu, who is now a member of the China Magic Society under the Chinese Acrobats Association.

"No one saw the magician as an artist. If you made a mistake, the audience looked at you like a fool. They considered it nothing but entertain-

ment," Xu said.

Things are different now. Magic is fashionable among Chinese youth, and many universities have started magic clubs and impromptu competitions. Being able to pull a rabbit out of a hat is a surefire way to make a lasting first impression.

The Beijing Qitian Magic Training Center is also feeling the heat of the fad. It recorded the highest enrollment in its history with more than 40 students sitting class every day, Yuan Xijun, the center's manager, said.

Problems ahead

Despite the interest, magic is just beginning and problems wait to pounce on the booming market.

"Magic isn't mainstream—it's just forming, and there is

no market chain to support top-level acts," magician Wang Yi said, contrasting magic in China with the West.

"There is no higher magic organization to evaluate a magician and or set standards for magicians in China," he said.

Wang Weien, another magician, has lobbied the government for years to approve a Chinese magicians' association, something he envisions as akin to the Society of American Magicians.

Today's magic is governed by the China Acrobatic Association.

"Many magicians get their start by being transferred out of acrobatics. It's time to have a nationwide association so individual magicians can join in," he said.

"We lack professional education and theoretical knowledge, and the country still lacks



Young people are enthusiastic about magic this year.



Without a mature market, magicians may find themselves out of work in a few years.

a real magic school," Xu said. Young people today teach themselves using books and instructional videos.

Liu Qian also said magic needs to be introduced to students early on using everyday objects so more will be inspired to take up the craft.

Market still undeveloped

With magic in vogue, many experts believe now is the time for it to evolve into an industry.

"No magic 'industry' exists here. There is no market for the acts," Yi Hua, director of Mission Magic Gold on Hunan Satellite TV, said.

Most overseas magicians have a manager or talent agency behind them. The market is complete from scouting talent, to promoting it to getting the magician on the stage. Truly stunning shows demand cooperation in costume and stage design: two more industries.

David Copperfield is considered one of the greatest illusionists in the world. His shows combine story, romance and technology for a bold scene.

But much of Copperfield's success is due to the agency – and the money-backing him. The agency is not only involved marketing the illusionist, but also provides him with new ideas and new technology for his programs, Yi said.

Liu Qian's success also depends on a think tank, and his producers provide and pick his costumes and make up.

The mainland magic market, by contrast, is undeveloped in all areas: programming, publicizing, performing and marketing.

Yi said few Chinese magicians understand the need for sponsorship and cooperation, and that a business mindset is required for talented magicians to produce such top-level acts.

Learning is more than copying

Western magicians see magic like a science that constantly requires new creations and discoveries.

By contrast, local magic troupes have never ventured into science to create new tricks: they inherit old tricks or learn from published Western tricks, leaving a large gap between them and the innovators.

Chinese magicians should be able to draw on their own culture to think up new ideas for tricks, Eric Eswin, chief of International Federation of Magic Societies, said during last week's championships.

"There is no need to copy Western magic," Eswin said. "The best thing for Chinese magicians would be to dig into Chinese culture to create new tricks."

Eswin also suggests Chinese magicians pay more attention to their performances and interact with the audience instead of focusing on their own skills.

During the weeklong world championships, many Western magicians found the local audience very difficult to please and too focused on unraveling every trick. The tendency for domestic audience to expose every trick has also frustrated Liu Qian.

Liu said it is useless and harmful to the careers of many magicians, because one skill can be connected to dozens of tricks.

"When you expose one, you may destroy a hundred tricks" Liu said. He said the charm of magic is its ability to surprise and awe the audience.

"It's hard to say anything about the future of magic in China even though the country has a huge potential market," Yi said.

She said magic is a special art that nothing can replace, but its development depends on government support, public understanding, a strong market and constant innovation. Without them, "the boom will not last long."



The best magicians depend on the support of their agents and backers to put on a great show. CFP Photos

The Mandarin scam

Students studying Chinese complain about poor teaching

To anyone looking to future-proof himself, studying Chinese in China might seem like a smart investment. Surely, then, the best thing you could do is to jump on a plane and sign up for classes, right? Wrong. Maybe, your best bet these days is to stay at home.

Studying Chinese in China may still be a good deal – universities here generally charge outsiders about US \$1,800 for five months' tuition – but that's where the advantages end. Language teaching in the Chinese mainland is almost uniformly poor, thanks to outdated materials and a wooden, stultifying teaching style.

That hasn't depressed the numbers: these days, some 100,000 foreigners flood into Chinese campuses yearly, a huge increase from the 50,000 total who came during the 30-year Mao era. The change is partly due to China's booming economy, but there's more than market forces at work. Confucius Institutes, Mandarin teaching centers set up worldwide, funnel students into year-abroad language courses in China, and Chinese colleges have also built fancy new dorms and stepped up intensive summer programs to attract foreigners (and their cash).

Yet most who come end up with a raw deal. Take the country's top language-training center, the Beijing Language and Culture University (BLCU). Mutune Kisilu, 19, is a typical enrollee. The Kenyan has spent a year there and says he can now discuss computers in Mandarin – but no thanks to his classes, in which he was frustrated by fusty textbooks and passive speaking exercises.

Jonathan Noble of the University of Notre Dame says part of the problem is that typical language classes in China are built around memorizing lists of written characters. Speaking practice is often limited; thus, while students gain vocabulary, "they're not actively thinking about how to use the words in different situations." As a result, he says, students who stay in the US sometimes gain fluency faster than those who have spent time in China.

Textbooks have their place, but those used in China tend to feature lists and do not contain enough repetition of basic grammatical patterns – a must-have. Students are most likely to stay focused when tackling real-life situations, something few mainland books offer. Instead, they tend to feature a mind-numbing panda chapter, then go on to describe the reproductive habits of the bamboo plant, say, or traditions behind famous dishes. Good luck finding business content or other real-world conversation.

What should an aspiring Mandarin speaker do, then? Either pay the much higher rates in the West or go online, where plenty of interactive systems offer fresh modern content.

There are some signs Chinese colleges are finally recognizing their problem. Leading the charge is Miao Qiang, 37, who's in charge of devising new Mandarin teaching texts at BLCU Press, which currently publishes 81 of China's 100 top-selling language books.

Miao is proud of New Practical Chinese Reader, written with the aid of Canadian universities in 2002. With 300,000 copies in use, it is cited by teachers as a big step forward. And indeed, it does feature some advances, though Miao acknowledges it's still short on work-world scenarios, which he says are still coming. All course content is now being reviewed every five years, he says. But online learning systems are far quicker to adapt – a few already teach how to promote one's strengths in today's dire economic climate.

(NewsWeek Magazine)



Foreign students learn characters from oracle bones in Anyang city in central China's Henan province, 3 April 2009. IC Photo

Teachers say

By Wang Dong

There are too many kinds of textbooks in the market now, with too few being of good quality. Students just starting to learn Chinese do not know how to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Some textbooks also considered classics also have serious problems. A textbook published by Beijing Language and Culture University Press and used by a lot of universities, for example, still receives complaints from my students.

Students are asked to learn Chinese characters at the very beginning, which I think is too hard for them. In my opinion, students should learn pinyin first as they are used to alphabetic writing, which would give them an easy start.

The content of most textbooks is also not arranged appropriately. It is important

to practice repeatedly for learning a new language. A lot of textbooks, however, fail to provide the necessary practice in the content learned in previous chapters.

Some of the content is also out-of-date. My students once told me that they found the prices of commodities in the text were too cheap to be true. Another example is "mai dan" – to pay a restaurant bill – an idiom often used in Chinese but unheard of in textbooks.

Books for teaching and learning should not be boring. One of my students once showed me a textbook full of interesting pictures, which thought was helpful.

The authorities seem to have not thought very highly of the Chinese textbooks used by foreign learners yet. We should have better books. If the books get better, teachers will teach more effectively and students can learn faster.

On the other hand, most students cannot get used to the teaching style of Chinese teachers. My students told me they like more interaction in the classroom, such as acting as customers and sellers while learning how to go shopping. The method used now is too stiff. Teachers keep talking on the platform and students are only asked to listen and recite. Maybe we are influenced by our own culture: think about how we learn English.

There are too many training schools in China, especially in Beijing and Shanghai. It is hard to say they are all professional at teaching Mandarin. Some teachers are not even qualified.

– Yu Ke (Colin), a teacher of Mandarin for three and a half years in Shanghai

Students say

By Wang Dong

I found the textbook I used while studying at Shanghai University very old-fashioned. The topics cover only a small area, such as what does the campus look like and what activities we can do on campus. Put simply, the vocabulary is too specific and not oriented toward other aspects of everyday life.

On the other hand, the grammar in that book was far too complicated for me. I think I should spend more time learning practical sentences and using them rather than getting entangled in the grammar.

We spent most of time reading out loud, practicing dialogue in groups and writing characters. However, I like to have more open dialogues and conversa-

tions with the teacher.

I have studied other languages, such as Russian, before. I found it is easier to learn because the teacher did not just read the textbook or ask us to recite the words. They would also show us an interesting movie or introduce a Russian song. I think these are teaching methods Chinese teachers should also use.

I am now taking a class at a training center on weekends and meeting with a private tutor twice a week. I found I could learn more with my tutor because the topics are flexible. While in the class I can only follow the topic given by the teacher. In fact, a lot of my friends prefer to have a private tutor.

I will stay in China for at least one more year. My goal for learning Manda-

rin is to be able to communicate with Chinese people more easily, as my Chinese colleagues speak little English.

My suggestion for Mandarin learning now is that the textbooks should be modernized. The topics should be more relevant to everyday life. The material should be more practical and well organized.

The teacher's training is also important. The teachers should also be encouraged to study abroad in order to better learn how to be more interactive. After all, teaching a language should be based less on the book and more on interaction.

– Bernhard Porpaczy, an Australian student of Mandarin in Shanghai. He has studied Chinese for almost one year and spent two months at a Mandarin class in Shanghai University.

Corrupt or careless

When multinationals embrace the bribery tradition

By Huang Daohen

Every business knows that to succeed it must adapt to the local market.

But for multinational companies in China, fearful of their fate if they fail to make extreme profits, they face another choice: whether to commit commercial bribery. Adapting to the Chinese market often means engaging in serious corruption – the kind that would spell their doom back home.



Many multinational companies have entered China's market since late 1970s, but they too follow the unspoken rules of corruption on China's uneven playing field.

CFP Photo

Multinational companies learn to bribe

More multinationals occupy the list of China's commercial bribery than record would be expected, according to a recent editorial by the *China Youth Daily*, which called for more effective laws to curb the trend.

The report recounted a series of bribery cases that involved multinational companies that had shocked the country.

Between 2000 and 2003, US telecommunications equipment maker Lucent was found to have spent 68 million yuan to bring as many as 1,000 Chinese officials on 315 trips to the US.

These "training trips" ended up at tourist destinations such as Hawaii, Las Vegas, Niagara Falls, Disney World and Universal Studios.

In late 2008, the German electronics giant Siemens agreed to having bribed government officials around the world to obtain contracts for more than 290 projects from the 1990s to 2007.

In China, the company was found to have given bribes of 166 million yuan to five state-owned hospitals, as well as having bribed officials to obtain government projects worth about 6.8 billion yuan, and two electricity transmission line projects in the south worth 5.7 billion yuan.

Similarly, a number of foreign companies – including IBM, Wal-Mart, Carrefour and Morgan Stanley – have had their corrupt dealings exposed.

The most recent case culminated in the arrest in China of four of Australian mining giant Rio Tinto's executives. The arrests were most likely prompted by the executives using money to buy industry secrets from the authorities.

According to Anbound Group, a Beijing-based consultant, multinational companies were behind 64 percent of the 500,000 corruption scandals investigated in China during the past decade.

"The number is still rising," Hou Jun, an analyst with Anbound who prepared the report, said.

Prisoner's dilemma

Though commercial bribery cases by multinational companies dominated the list, the companies are not the only ones to blame, Hou said.

China's opening in late 1970s attracted multinationals, which were used to the fairness and openness of Western markets.

However, corruption is ingrained in Chinese business culture, and the new commercial rules of the West were sorely out of place, Hou said.

"Old customs and bad habits reign in

the commercial sphere: personal relations determine the survival of a company, and entertainment and gifts determine the fate of competitors," he said.

Confronted with the commercial environment in China, any multinational company entering the Chinese market faces an unpleasant but easy choice: bribe or die.

Much as in the prisoner's dilemma, where one prisoners rats out the other for his own gain, companies chose to follow the local "tradition," Hou said.

Enforced laws needed

Experts called for a systematic means to prevent such briberies.

"It is necessary to formulate an improved Anti-Commercial Bribery Law and harshen its penalties," Zhao Xiao, economics professor at University of Science and Technology Beijing, said.

Zhao said too much effort went into attracting foreign investment and developing the economy this last decade: too little went into combating the ills brought by this business boom.

Commercial bribery means multinationals are conforming to one hidden rule: companies will use every means possible to violate the regulations if it can offer an unethical edge in competition.

"This can be ruinous for developing markets such as China's," he said.

Analyst

Boundaries of commercial bribery

As foreign companies remain under scrutiny for bribery, it is important to ensure they understand the boundaries and take steps to minimize the risks of breaching relevant laws and regulations.

Discounts and commissions

Transparency is an important factor in distinguishing between permissible discounts and illegal kickbacks. Discounts and commissions should be properly invoiced and duly recorded in the company's accounting records and paid directly to the customer, distributor or supplier, and not to any individual staff member.

Gifts

Chinese law does not have a distinction between a bribe and a gift. Cases suggest that the giving of a gift could constitute bribery if there is an intention to derive an improper benefit, or where the value of the gift is excessive.

There are no guidelines on what may be regarded as excessive. In most instances, small promotional gifts such as T-shirts, pens or memory sticks marked with a company logo are unlikely to be considered excessive.

Meals and entertainment

The provision of meals and entertainment is not dealt with in current legislation and appears to be generally permissible in China.

However, it is possible that providing particularly lavish meals or other forms of entertainment could be regarded as an indirect form of bribery.

– Wen Yi, senior research associate with the Institute of China's Reform and Development at Renmin University of China

Bribery cases

The Walmart case

Kunming Wal-Mart, while submitting applications for projects, provided the wife of a local official with a guided shopping tour of Hong Kong and pocket money equal to 100,000 yuan in December 2003.

The DPC case

The US Judicial Department revealed that the Tianjin subsidiary of Diagnostic Products Corp (DPC), the world's largest manufacturer of medical diagnostic equipment, paid bribes equal to 11 million yuan to state-owned hospitals to convince them to buy DPC products in May 2005.

The IBM case

Beijing's First Intermediate People's Court delivered a verdict in November 2006 stating that from 2002 to 2003, IBM's senior management made arrangements through an intermediary to meet with Zhang Enzhao, the former head of China Construction Bank. As repayment, IBM transferred a "service fee" of 1.5 million yuan to an account with HSBC held in the name of an intermediary, who later transferred it to Zhang.

The Carrefour Case

The Chinese head office of French retail giant Carrefour issued a circular in August 2007 stating that eight members of the company's management staff in Beijing had been arrested for suspected acceptance of commercial bribes. The bribes totaled more than 1 million yuan.

The Jia Junpeng phenomenon

Internet scam or sign of a growing leisure society?

By Huang Daochen

"Jia Junpeng phenomenon" attracted over 4 million viewers and nearly 200,000 comments in less than six hours.

Is it a demonstration of collective boredom or an Internet scam manufactured by avaricious promoters? Others believe it is a signal of China's becoming a leisure society.



Jia Junpeng's page post attracted the attention of millions of netizens, many of who made photos using the content. Illustration by Jiao Shu

Jia Junpeng phenomenon

On July 16, tens of thousands of people became Internet friends with Jia Junpeng.

No one knows who Jia is, but the name became famous in less than 24 hours due to a forum post titled "Jia Junpeng, your mother is calling you home for dinner."

Jia might be a tiny pebble, but he was able to create a huge ripple. Within six hours, his post got more than 390,000 page views and 17,000 comments. As for 6 pm on July 20, the number of comments exceeded 310,000 and the number of page views reached 1,084,000 in a merely four days.

The post first appeared on the World of Warcraft (WoW) forum on Baidu. A WoW server outage in China has lasted for 40 days as the game changes companies from The9 to NetEase, keeping many Chinese WoW players offline.

Some 5 million players, who have been angrily waiting for the return of the servers, have interpreted the post as a call for the service to start back up as soon as possible.

"Online players are bored and that the post provided them an opportunity to get away from this boredom," Lee Rui, an industrial analyst in Beijing, said.

That probably makes sense. "Your mother is calling you home for dinner" strikes a chord in all those who had the childhood experience of forgetting to go

home for dinner and being dragged back by their mothers, Lee said.

A fictional character

The sudden popularity of the previously obscure "Jia Junpeng" was pronounced by many netizens to be a miracle of the Chinese Internet.

Does Jia Junpeng really exist? Or is this Internet meme manufactured by some promoter?

The answer is the latter. Huang Lianhua is the CEO of a media company in Beijing that specializes in Internet promotion on behalf of various big-name brands. He announced in his blog that he is the creator of Jia.

"Actually, we prepared two scenarios. For example, what if nobody reacted? And what if it got red-hot? But we never expected that it would be this hot," Huang said in his blog.

Huang is 27 and his company has 10 employees. Each year, they run three to five similar promotions. "Usually we do not do regular marketing. These hypes come from special customer requests."

Huang said that they planned "Jia Junpeng" over the course of two months. They used four advertising agencies to monitor and implement the project, reporting by telephone every two hours. "In total, more than 800 Internet marketing persons were used. They registered more than 20,000 ID's and made more than

100,000 replies," he said.

During a recent interview, Huang said he was not at liberty to reveal who asked him to run this promotion, but he acknowledged that it had to do with WoW. "We all know that World of Warcraft has been out of commission for some time. The WoW users were idle, so we wanted to create an incident to excite the WoW users."

Signal of a growing consumer society

Internet miracle aside, experts say this little post and its thread have shown the rise of China's middle class, and that China has entered a consumer society where people enjoy a more leisurely lifestyle.

"Think about this, so many people now have the leisure time to become concerned about the tiny Jia Junpeng event at the same time," John Xie, a professor of sociology at Peking University, said, "That's the essence of a consumer society."

Xie said a consumer society has two features. On the one hand, people have more time for entertainment relative to work hours, so people spend more time consuming. On the other hand, people have more money with which to purchase consumer goods.

Currently, people no longer need to worry about feeding themselves and dressing warmly, so they seek leisure and entertainment in their spare time, Xie said.

Analyst

New business of promotion online

By Wang Yu

The Jia Junpeng case has taken the Chinese Internet community by storm in both social and economic terms. KPMedia, the company who claimed made hundreds of thousands by creating the hype, never confirmed the relationship between the sentence and the World of Warcraft's downtime, said Pu Lin, adjunct professor of sociology in Nanjing University of Technology. Still, no one can deny its success as an online marketing campaign.

The company has said that it started to make the plan two months before the article with only one sentence posted on the Internet.

"I've talked with a lot of people about the case," said Zhang Qubiao, creative director of Word of Mouth Internet, a local online marketing company. "I doubt the company's announcement. No client would accept such a plan because it brings nothing but negative attention."

It is not the first time a media company has claimed to be the originator of a hype. But whoever of the mastermind behind Jia Junpeng is, the online marketing business has been noticed by the public. Due to the recent boom in Chinese Internet user, advertising companies have begun to wage their battles online.

There are two main methods for this business. First is to spread the content on websites frequented by the target audience. Second, promoters may create more specific offline to attract the attention of the news reporters.

Daqi.com has been making an effort to build a reputation as a "socialized media" during the past few years by integrating contents made by netizens through its self-created background search engine. Last year, the website opened its "experience center," which is run by its sales department. The products which the clients hope to promote will be tested by netizens chosen via the website.

According to the website, such test reports written by netizens are more trust worthy than those by professional reviewers.

"These websites' aim is to sell their clients' products, but as they are also the media, they also hope to sell themselves," Zhang said. Word of Mouth Internet, which runs more like a traditional advertising company, was started in 2006.

"As far as I know, there are no more than five companies which specialize in online marketing with large-scale operations. Small companies are everywhere, but it is not that easy to survive in such a keen competitive environment," Zhang said.

Besides the competition, the promoters are also under pressure from their clients. Most of the clients have limited knowledge about this new marketing method, their hope is simply that an Internet promotion can effectively replace traditional processes and hit their target markets.

Comment

What we are following is not a post, but loneliness.

- A follow-up comment by many netizens

There are two possibilities as to where the post is leading. Firstly, it will give rise to the phenomenon of an Internet mob and some websites will have to be closed; secondly, the original activity will be commercialized and in several days, Jia Junpeng

will be a registered trademark.

- Hu Jiqing, associate professor

So they [Chinese netizens] do act like Western people on the Internet. Do they have things similar to Chuck Norris? Maybe their version is about Jacky Chan? For the West they usually call these retards the /b/tards. /b/ as in the 4chan forums where a lot of Retarded Internet Phenomena come from. I wonder what

will be the name for China's Retard Internet Phenomena?

- Carol Quek, marketing consultant

This post has no predecessor in popularity. Netizens who are addicted to Internet games actually harbor a sense of guilt about their families, which he takes as the main reason for the early uses of the post.

- felix, IT engineer

Behind the hilarious performance art

By Zhang Dongya

About a dozen men and women are tied up in a rope. Some are completely entwined in the rope, while others are holding it. They are smoking cigarettes with satisfied smiles. One man is being dragged around by others, struggling to escape with a pained look on his face.

This performance was staged for the opening ceremony of the 10th anniversary of the Open Performance Art Festival Wednesday, featuring artists from countries like the US, UK and Australia.

About 400 international artists joined in the eight-week Performance Art Festival this year. Starting in 2000, the annual festival based in Beijing has been held in many other cities in China, with performance artists from more than 30 countries participating.

Performance art, even after 50-something years of development, is still considered too avant-garde by many, which sometimes keeps audience numbers low. But the artists were glad to see even slight changes in people's reactions. "Beijing is overwhelming, and I just hope not all of Beijing but half of Beijing could come and see our performance - on bicycle," joked Rainer Pagel, an artist from the UK.



Performance art, though still considered too avant-garde by many, continues to attract devoted audiences worldwide.

Photos provided by Open Realization Contemporary Art Center

From different origins

In a seminar before the festival, performance artists from different countries excitedly discussed the names and forms of performance arts in their own countries.

Though "performance art" is a universal term in English, it does not have the same meaning in other languages. "In Greece, we use a term which is very close to 'ceremony' or 'well-planned activity,'" Demosthene Agrafiotis from Athens said.

"In Japan, performance art is very close to *noh* theater, traditional Japanese theater. While in China, it is called *xingwei yishu*, which literally means 'behavior art' or 'action,'" said Liu Lushan,

who was born in China but grew up in Japan.

Performance art, like other forms, has a close relationship to local culture, and the international festival is expected to gather all the different concepts and cultures together.

Martin Renteria from Mexico, 43, the curator of the eighth week of the festival, will focus on performance art in Mexico at the festival. About 80 artists will show up that week.

"It is the first time for so many Latin American artists to come to China, to afford lectures on the history and culture of Latin American performance art, as well as to perform," he said.

Renteria is also planning to make a performance art festival only for Chinese artists in Mexico next year. "My purpose is to start making very important cultural exchanges between China and Mexico through an open festival," he said.

Getting the message

During the past few decades, performance art has experienced several stages. In the very beginning, people were curious but misunderstood.

In the 1990s, performance art experienced a revival. Performance art movements received more and more support from audiences worldwide, with festival attendance on the rise. With this, too, came more experimentation - sometimes gruesome.

The Mexican artist Renteria does not deny the extreme behavior. "It depends on the artists, whether their purpose is to simply attract people's attention and surprise people or they try to convey a message," he said. "It often depends on the strength of their concept. If they have a week concept, then

they might use these kinds of tricks, to get an immediate reaction from their audience, but can be a bit hollow in my opinion."

Nowadays, most artists prefer to focus on personal feelings and interests, by many to be which is considered a progress for performance art.

Renteria himself now focuses more on social subjects, exploring consciousness and perception and what it means to be human.

A tough road

Performance artists often suffer physical injury and discomfort, as they have to stand still or keep a certain postures for a long time, sometimes even cutting or burning their bodies. However, the hardest thing for them is far beyond the body matters, but the acceptance and understanding of others.

Performance artist Coco Degaller, 21, from the US, is still in school. She believes that an invisible line exists between people in more traditional theater and it is more experimental counterparts. "It is difficult sometimes because when you want to connect with other students, but a lot of times they exclude you from the conversation of art. They cannot accept it as art," she said.

It does not only happen among general public, but also among the fellow artists. Rainer Pagel, 61, from the UK, still remembers a few years ago when he performed at a public market. His artist friends, who were painters, stumbled upon the scene and questioned its artistic merit.

Doubts often come from parents and friends who do not want to see them waste their lives.

But they are not hurried to justify it as art. "We don't want this [to identify it as art]. Because it will become like others. That

is the power of performance art, and it is beyond limits," Demosthene Agrafiotis said.

Without acceptance and identification, performance art gets little support and sponsorship. It is still hard for performance artists to survive or get a career off the ground. So, making the performance happen or getting opportunities to perform are one of the most important things for many artists.

Paul Waddell, 26, from the US, became a teacher in order to let people know and understand more performance art.

The Mexican artist Martin Renteria is setting up meetings with big international brands looking for sponsorship. So far, he has successfully won some support within Mexico.

Deeper expression

For the majority of performance artists, what attracted them to this form of theater is that it satisfied a longing for a deep expression of emotion that they could not get elsewhere.

"Performance is about sharing with others. We are sharing death, pain and whatever you give you are part of it," Ian Colon, 21 from the US, said. "And whatever you have experienced, whether it is boring, dull or exciting, you are participating."

There is huge debate about making money through performance art. Unlike other mediums where there is a tangible product to be marketed and sold, performance art offers no such thing. UK artist Rainer Pagel advises that, "If you want to make money, do not do performance art."

Why does he do it, then?

"I am doing performance art because I am enjoying the moment when it happens," he said.



Photo by Sherry Wu





Katarina Stuebe

Photo by Zhao Hongyi

Appreciate the artistry of the Sydney Opera House

By Zhao Hongyi

A young German woman spent years trying to illustrate the points, lines and curves of the Sydney Opera House built in the 1971. Using her camera, her aim was to show respect to the Danish architect, Jorn Utzon, and to introduce the inner beauty of the world famous building.

Katarina Stuebe, during her book release at the Australian Embassy in Beijing on Monday, said the publishing of her photographs of the Opera House was "a dream come true." The book launch was organized by both Australian and Danish embassies.

Five years ago, when Katarina was still a student of architecture in Germany, she traveled to

Australia and was moved by the Sydney Opera House. While still a student, she found the conceptual sketches and shapes of the shells evocative and was drawn to study more.

From that time, Katarina was determined to unveil the moving details to people around the world. "The best way is to use photographs," Katarina said. "The opera house is like a white sculpture standing in the Sydney Bay with music elements. It has become an icon of the city, and the country."

Jorn Utzon was a Danish architect and designed the opera house. He has designed dozens of famous buildings around the world, but has never returned to

see his works.

The old architect lives in a small village near Copenhagen. He receives thousands of photos of the Opera House from his fans around the world every year, which gives him great comfort for his great works and efforts made so far.

"An architect's gift to society is to bring joy to the people from the surroundings he created." That is the principle of Jorn's work over the years.

After returning from Australia, Katarina visited Jorn Utzon and received help from his architect son, Jan Utzon, learning more details of the designing process. From the tremendous files and design papers, she learned more,

not only about design, but about the human spirit.

"Jorn was a kind, generous man," Katarina said. "He liked to live a simple life, avoiding quarrels and conflicts."

Since the opera house was finished in 1971, it has attracted nearly 7.5 million visitors. "The number is astounding when compared with the total population of Australia, which has just over 20 million," Geoff Raby, Australia's ambassador to China, said.

The book was released in a number of Australian cities in May of this year and will be launched in many European cities, including Copenhagen, Berlin, Paris, Madrid, Stockholm, Moscow and London in September.

Shanghai Expo 2010 EU Pavilion breaks ground

By Venus Lee

The Ground Breaking Ceremony of the joint EU-Belgian Pavilion at Shanghai Expo 2010 took place on Wednesday afternoon at the Expo site. Belgian Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Didier Reynders, Consul General of Belgium in Shanghai H. E. Marc Pecsteen and Vice-Commissioner General of the EU Pavilion Alexander McLachlan attended the ceremony.

The EU will be sharing the pavilion with Belgium, which will be holding the revolving presidency of the EU for most of the Expo's duration.

The pavilion is created around the structure of a "Brain Cell," the dominant conceptual image for the building. Echoing the brain cell design, the general theme of the EU permanent exhibition will be "Intelligent Europe." "The European is cemented together in a very

intelligent way resulting in deep integration and solidarity, reflected in a body of common rules and standards as well as thousands of joint projects. For the wellbeing of its 500 million citizens, the EU is constantly creating connections and policies across the boundaries of its 27 member countries," McLachlan said.

"It is the first time the EU has participated in a World Fair held outside its territory, reflecting the importance that the EU attaches to its partnership with China, as well as the strength and vitality of the economic, cultural and scientific ties between the EU and China," he said.

The permanent multimedia exhibition in the EU Pavilion will present key achievements of the EU, such as environmental preservation, clean resources and energy-saving models, mobility between and inside cities, consumer protec-

tion and public health, education models and exchange programs, sports, information and communication technologies, rural or urban interaction or regional solidarity, without forgetting the EU's role in the world as a major donor and diplomatic power. The EU will also fully participate in the Expo online project for the billions of virtual visitors that will not be able to come in person to the Expo.

According to the Consul General of Belgium in Shanghai, the pavilion will be composed of a structure which is easy to build, to disassemble and to recycle. To adapt the building to Shanghai's warm and moist climate, the exterior is built up of three mainly closed facades, composed of stretched metal plates. The pavilion does not only accommodate the exposition halls of Europe, Belgium and its communities and regions, but also offers convivial meeting places



Attendants press their hands on molds to make handprints at the groundbreaking ceremony.

IC Photo

including a restaurant, a bar and a VIP-centre. Those will be used for holding thematic events that aim to deepen the EU-China dialogue on the relevant policies under the theme of the Expo: "better city, better life."

Besides EU-Belgian Pavilion, Polish and Mexican Pavilions also

start construction this week.

With the confirmation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) of its participation, 192 countries and 49 international organizations have already accepted invitations to attend the World Expo 2010 Shanghai by August 3, 2009, according to the official web site of the Expo.

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Editor: Han Manman Designer: Zhao Yan

People interested in Muay Thai find their group in town

By Annie Wei

Everyday after 5:30 pm, while most people are leaving their offices, near Wanda Plaza, Black Tiger Club Hero starts to fill up. Some people come four times a week, traveling 1.5 hours from Wudaokou. They are here to train in Muay Thai and Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu.

The atmosphere is heated. Led by trainers, members doing jogging, push-ups and practicing punches and kicks.

Li Rui, 27, one of the female members comes almost every day. Li said that she liked Muay Thai and the training and sweating made her feel fit and happy.

Club Hero is the only place that provides Muay Thai training by professionals. A month ago, the club also held a tournament among advanced members and instructors.

Vince Soberano, 45, from the US, the club's founder and eight-time world champion, talked to *Beijing Today* about starting the club.

"My friends told me that there was no place to practice Muay Thai in Beijing," Soberano said.

If you think martial arts pros know nothing except fighting, you are wrong. Soberano did not come to China as a Thai-boxing fighter. In fact, he had been working as a software engineer for 16 years and came to Beijing for a cell phone project with a Chinese telecom carrier.

With his friends' encouragement, Soberano started at other gyms and fitness centers. Within two months, there were so many people interested in Muay Thai that Soberano and his friend decided to setup their own training spot.

"I always wanted to work with Muay Thai full-time but my parents wanted me



Black Tiger Club Hero organized a tournament in June, attracting over 200 audience members.

Photo provided by Cindy Zhang

to have a regular job," he said.

The club now has 320 members. With monthly membership fee of 1,200 yuan per person, the place makes less than half a million yuan per month including other products and services they sell.

"We planned to have 250 members within a year but we reached 300 within three months," Soberano said.

As far as local students and expat students are concerned, Vincent said there were not much difference as everyone came for their strong interests in the sports. Chinese students tend to be a bit more shy and less aggressive. Foreign stu-

dents are more pro-active and are eager to put what they learn into practice.

A big attraction here is that the club has professional trainers. People who have a strong interest in martial arts find they can learn a lot.

"Knowledge is addictive," Soberano said. All trainers are hand-picked. Being in the industry for three decades, he can easily find well-trained fighters: they have two former champions from Thailand, one professional Thai-boxer from the US and one professional kickboxer from France.

Bush Shen, a 25-year-old blackbelt from the US, has worded as a trainer three

months. Shen has been learning boxing for five years. Although he prefers living back home to Beijing's pollution, he took it as opportunity to help Vince, and to learn more about China.

Xu Aihui, the first Chinese woman who was granted a belt in Muay Thai trains in Club Hero. She has also become an assistant trainer here and will fight in King's Cup this December, the biggest competition in Thailand.

Black Tiger Club Hero

Where: 8, Langjiayuan, Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 8656 7818

Lazio teams and fans galore at Piazza Italia

By Annie Wei

The entire Lazio team headed to Piazza Italia after their training to celebrate the presentation of their new jersey sponsor to the media. Their arrival attracted many local sports media and Lazio fans in Beijing.

As the event and media center for Supercoppa TIM Beijing, Piazza Italia will have different activities from now on to August 16.

In the lead-up to the match, fans can also buy Lazio and Inter merchandise at Piazza Italia, and participate in their daily lucky draw for a ticket to the match on Saturday. The grand lucky draw on August 16 even promises signed footballs and jerseys from both teams.



Lazio fans gathering in front of Piazza Italia to welcome their team.

Photo provided by Piazza Italia

Quarantined schoolchildren not lonely

By Venus Lee

To lighten up the boredom of groups of foreign students' daily life during the quarantine, Beijing United Family Hospital and Clinics (BJU) has donated a number of toys.

A group of British and American students are spending seven days in quarantine at Beijing's Yanxiang Hotel due to concerns of H1N1 influenza virus upon their arrival to China.

Over 1,400 students from the UK and the US attended "Chinese Bridge Middle School Students' Summer Camp" in Beijing. Some students were found

carrying H1N1 influenza virus at the airport, according to China National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (NOCL).

So far, 21 students were confirmed as infected with the H1N1 influenza virus and 194 students and teachers were quarantined at Yanxiang Hotel near the Fourth Ring Road.

"Although students can play or exercise in the hotel garden, their life in the hotel must be very boring because loving to be free is their nature, so we made small but meaningful donation to let them know that the Beijing community cares them,"

Sylvia Pan, general manager of BJU said.

During the quarantine, doctors from Beijing Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention conducted medical examinations for them twice a day.

Ma Jianpu, a staff of the hotel, said the hotel offers free breakfast, lunch and dinner for all students and teachers under the medical observation.

"We arranged different recipe for them each day. As they are aged 12 to 16, the hotel made it a priority to cater to their dietary needs," he said.

As of press time, the students have already restarted their summer camp.

Event

Exploring Guozijian street

It's Sunday afternoon and where do you go? Are you looking for someone to hang out with at some of Beijing's most emblematic sites? Want to enrich your knowledge of Chinese culture and also experience and it with friendly Chinese people? Just meet Mandarin Tube Club members on August 9, 2:30 pm at Guozijian Street West.

Where: Meet at Guozijian Street West

When: August 9, 2:30 pm
Tel: 139 0109 6454
Cost: 60 yuan/person (including drinks in the teahouse; not including site tickets)

Fez Bar- One year anniversary

Fez Bar will hold its 1st anniversary party Saturday. Fez opened on August 8, 2008 to coincide with the opening celebrations of the Beijing Olympics. In celebration of its one year anniversary, Fez Bar will come alive with live "Moroccan style" entertainment, with performances throughout the night and special guest DJ's performing until late. Party starts from 9pm. Birthday cake at midnight.

Where: 23 Qianmen Dongdajie, Dongcheng District

When: August 8, 9 pm - 1 am the next day

Tel: 6559 6266
Cost: free

(By Venus Lee)

Olympic beach volleyball venue now open



New beach and pool in Chaoyang Park only open before August 31.

By Feng Qian

As a city that lacks in water and is not close to seaside, the opening of the former Olympic beach volleyball venue in Chaoyang Park is such a blessing.

Compared to any other outdoor pool spots in town, the new venue has good water quality, more space and facilities designed for the Games. The

tickets are not extremely cheap but worthy of the price, especially considering that it is only open this month.

Take the sand beach for example, which both looks and feels like a real beach. Beach chairs and umbrellas are also provided.

The tickets from Monday to Friday are 50 yuan before 2 pm and 80 yuan afterwards. On the

weekend tickets cost 100 yuan, and it is open from 10 am to 9 pm daily.

Song Jiansheng, from the sports center of Beijing, said that the sand was shipped from the Hainan, and passed through many procedures to meet the Olympic Games' standard. Once you step your feet onto it, you can tell the difference of the sand here and those in Tuanjiehu park.

The swimming area is popular and its water is very clear. Song said that the water is as same quality as that in the Water Cube. It has three pools, with depth of 1.5, 1.2 and 0.4 meters.

Where: West gate at 1 Non-gzhan Nan Lu, or south gate at 1, Chaoyang Gongyuan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 6591 5258 or 6591 8383

CFP Photo

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to:
weiyi@ynet.com

My son is five years old and I am looking for an interesting summer camp for him that will let him meet more kids and practice his communication skills. Can you recommend a children's summer camp in the city?

The Children's Learning Center of Beijing is offering a summer camp program featuring morning and afternoon activities for children 2 - 7 years old with a choice of enrollment for 1 - 5 days a week.

Children can participate in a range of activities such as speech, drama, music, sports, arts and crafts and more at the Children's Learning House's summer camp. They will sing songs, dance, act, play games, develop physical skills, use problem solving skills, display creativity and most importantly, have fun.

Prices begin at 160 yuan per day and fees are calculated according to the number of days registered. Families will get a full refund for all cancellations made within 48 hours.

Where: 3056 Gahood Villa, Baixinzhuan, Houshayu, Shunyi district (Opposite Capital Paradise)

Tel: 8046 7082

I am from Australia and am very interested in Chinese religion, especially Zen. Where can I find a Zen retreat in the city?

A weekend Zen trip organized by China Culture Center is for people who are serious about Zen Buddhism. You'll meditate, live and eat with the monks at Hongluo Temple near Huairou. There will be meditation instruction and a strict no-talking policy will be enforced.

Where: Kent Center, Anjialou, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Sanyuanqiao, Chaoyang district
Tel: 6432 9341

I've heard that tango can help tone the legs and butt, which has me really eager to learn it. I don't have any experience in dance and am wondering if there is somewhere in the city that offers tango classes for beginners?

Tango Salon Workshop offers the tango basics: combinations and sequences alignment of the body, crosses, pivots and more.

The salon is run by a Taiwanese dancer who received her tango training in Argentina, as well as three other Argentinian tango masters Alejandro Adrian and Camila Ye. This dance school runs a variety of dance classes throughout the city, as well as some impressive performances.

Where: Camila Tango Salon, 22 Qingnian Lu, Huicheng Jia Yuan Building 6, 1 Danyuan, Rm. 101, Chaoyang district
Tel: 8552 5228

(By Venus Lee)

Olympic venue gym-cards on sale

By Chen Zao

Interested to try out the seven professional venues located in Asia Game Village area? The National Olympic Sports Center has seven venues there, with badminton, ping-pong and volleyball at the gymnasium, jogging at the stadium, and swimming at Yingdong Natatorium. It also has training areas for squash, indoor soccer, basketball and volleyball. Authorities will make gym-card membership available starting next Monday, August 8.

Meng Zhenrong, the person responsible for the National Olympic Sports Center said the gym card can be used in the seven venues and in nearby the restaurants, hotels and shops.

Anyone interested can buy a gym card at any listed venue. Chinese nationals need to show their ID cards for purchasing the cards, while foreigners need to present their passports.

"We will also make the gym card usable in other relevant venues, like supermarkets and restaurants in the future," Meng said.

The gym-card has four different prices, from 1,000 yuan up to 50,000 yuan valid for 1 to 5 years.

The National Olympic Sports Center

Where: 1, Anding Lu, Yayingcun, Chaoyang District

Tel: 8437 5108
The Stadium
Open: 9 am - 5 pm
The Gymnasium
Open: 8:30am - 10 pm
The Training Ground
Open: 9 am - 10 pm
The Training Stadium
Open: 8 am - 5 pm
Yingdong Natatorium
Open: 10 am - 10 pm
Hockey Stadium
Open: 6 am - 10 pm
Athletes Apartment
Open: 12 am - 12 pm



Yingdong Natatorium

CFP Photo

Flower Expo tickets are available

By Zhao Hongyi

The 7th China Flower Expo will be held between September 26 and October 5 in Shunyi District and Weifang, Shandong Province. The tickets are available from August 1 at a price of 60 yuan each.

The flower expo has been called China's flower Olympic Games, hosting nearly all commercial flower types and transactions for the whole year.

This year, over 1,300 flower producers and dealers will participate in the annual flower fair, bring-

ing cherry blossoms from Japan and tulips from Holland, making the fair a particularly nice destination in the hot summer.

The fair has also invited a number of multinational companies in the flower business, like Dummen from Germany, famous for its "redfox"; Corn Bak B.V. from Holland, famous for its pineapple seeds, PanAmerican Seed, which is the largest flower seed breeder and producer, AVO Anthurium Vogels B.V. from Holland famous for its

various anthurium.

The organizer has also built a traditional Chinese garden with Chinese pavilions, waterfalls, corridors and streams, to demonstrate the signature characteristics of the Chinese flower industry and market. The garden also gives visitors a place to relax.

In the outdoor plaza, a 42-meter high flower pagoda has been built with 38 themed exhibition zones from various regions throughout China. Here, visitors can find the various flowers, gardens and cul-

tures between the provinces and autonomous regions.

The expo venue, according to the organizer, will become a permanent city park after the expo, as well as the largest flower transaction and logistic center. Located opposite the new China International Exhibition Center, the expo venue will also become part of the exhibition center in the future.

Tickets are open for booking at: 8418 6969. You can also log on to: flowerexpo.com for an online visit.

Treasures of the past

By Ma Mingxuan

Throughout history, many of the greatest pieces have remained long-lost to the public. Some were immediately tucked away by collectors and others buried.

In the upcoming 2nd Chinese Artistic Treasure Exhibition on August 16, some of these unknown curiosities will resurface as part of the new collection of antiques and the finest folk crafts.

Chinese Artistic Treasures Exhibition

Where: Art Treasures Museum of the Chinese Nation, 24 Jinyuchi
Zhong Qu, Chongwen District
When: August 16 – September 18, 9 am – 5 pm
Admission: free
Tel: 5217 1111

Brilliantly wrought to light



Ancient Hongshan jades have returned after nearly a century away from the Chinese mainland.

Photos provided by Art Treasures Museum

More than 2,000 attractions at the upcoming exhibition are divided into seven main themes, including Hongshan antique jades, Tibetan Buddhism, Beijing's intangible cultural heritage and the greatest collections from folk craftsmen.

Each piece has the inherent fame of being a national treasure, but there is more to the story of their inclusion. Many of the pieces are appearing for the first time, or reappearing after centuries or millennia of neglect.

Lost Hongshan jades return

The Hongshan people were the first known jade craftsmen in China. Their Neolithic culture spanned from 4700 BC to 2900 BC and was centered in Chifeng, a city in eastern Inner Mongolia.

In the 1930s, the Japanese military invaded and occupied northeastern China. The army scientists stumbled on one of the most valuable Hongshan sites and carried out a destructive excavation and looting campaign. In the 80 years since, 104 collectors spared no expense to obtain the stolen jades and return them to Chifeng.

Lin Yunteng, a mineralogist at Taiwan University who specializes in jade, decided to organize an exhibition of the antique Hongshan jades in Chifeng.

As the first jade carvers in ancient China, and their first jade articles were earrings. The craftsmen would polish crude jade into a circle, and then used rough rope to "cut" a crevice in the circle so it could be worn on the ear.

Hongshan culture is represented by its earrings, jade zhulong – a dragon with a pig's head-and by jade daggers

which were produced into the mid-Neolithic Age. The exhibition will show 1,368 Hongshan jades, making it the largest ever jade exhibition.

Masterpieces of Suzhou embroidery go public

Ren Huixian was one of the greatest embroiderers in Suzhou during the last century. When she died in 2003 at age 87, she left many of her works behind. However, her son, Zhang Yunsu, refused to allow any of them to be displayed in public, saying it was an insult to her memory. Ren's final works have remained a mystery since her death.

The exhibition's "Collection of Craftsmen" section called on every province to submit one work as its representative masterpiece. Jiangsu Province submitted a Suzhou embroidery titled "Gu Su Fan Hua Tu." The piece depicts thousands of flowers blooming in the city.

On hearing the selection, Ren's son, Zhang, said his mother's work was far superior and asked to submit two of her pieces. They were accepted immediately. Next weekend, the embroideries will be unveiled for the first time.

Ren, a former apprentice of the Suzhou embroidery master Yang Shouyu, created her own style of embroidery called double-faced embroidery, which combines different colors with sketch embroidery and alterations between strong and weak stitches.

The pieces "Prosperous Scene in Gusu" being exhibited this time are two of her classic portraits.

Besides embroidery, the section includes hundreds of crafts selected from all over the country. Zhang Jingshou, a master of porcelain, contributed his work "Flowers in Twelve Months," as a folding

screen. The piece is recorded by Guinness World Records for its size and craftsmanship. There is also a tapestry with portraits of Chairman Mao and Deng Xiaoping made in 1950s by a folk craftsman.

Cloisonné manufacture revealed

Looking at an elaborate cloisonné, it is easy to forget the intense labor that goes into the multi-step enamel process of this ancient metalworking technique.

Cloisonné was listed as a National Non-Material Cultural Heritage in 2006. The skill originated during the reign of the Jingtai Emperor (1449-1457) of the Ming Dynasty, and was said to have been imparted by fairies to the oldest craftsman after a fire consumed the palace treasures. Since then, craftsmen learned to solder copper strips together to make the solid copper bodies of bottles, plates, vases, jars, boxes and ash-trays, and then apply twisted threads of copper to the bodies.

"You can never make a cloisonné work by yourself; you can only be a small part of it," Zhao Jinyu, guide of the exhibition, said.

The manufacturing process is very complicated and elaborate and demands precision from a group of superior craft workers. The skill level is so high that it can take a lifetime to make one excellent cloisonné. Fewer and fewer people are willing to pursue a career in manufacture, which is both monotonous and wearisome, and the form is on the verge of extinction.

During the exhibition, the hidden manufacturing procedure will be shown in detail for the first time. Visitors can see the materials and instruments used in each step of making cloisonné. Even if few people are willing to dedicate their lives

to a career in cloisonné, the art should be revealed to the public so people can have a sense of their vanishing heritage, Zhang Tonglu, a cloisonné master, said.

Buddhism in thangka paintings

Thangka are elaborate paintings done on reeled canvas with bright colors characteristic of Tibetan art since the Neolithic Age. They are far more than just paintings – each thangka expresses a moving story and can only be felt by the heart.

Tradition holds that the first thangka was painted by a Zanpu, or Tibetan king, of the Tubo Dynasty (7th-9th century). That Zanpu painted a portrait of White Lhamo, the Goddess of Tibet, using the blood from his nose as pigment. Afterward, the painting was stored in a statue of White Lhamo and was not removed for hundreds of years. Thangka has become an expression of the painter's piety and an interpretation of divinity ever since.

During the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), similar disciples painted a thangka of the thousand-armed bodhisattva Guanyin, the female form of the Avalokitesvara. Guanyin is believed to be a kind-hearted and merciful deity who intervenes to save humans from tribulation. However, because the troubles of the world are far too many, Guanyin broke herself into thousands of pieces as an apology for failing to save everyone. Her pieces were collected by Amitabha Buddha, who turned them into thousands of arms to continue to help and save earthly people.

In addition to thangka, the exhibition has statues of Buddha and historical religious implements so viewers can gain a deeper understanding of Tibetan Buddhism and its art.



Statue of a lion-faced Buddha



Cloisonné ware with bull heads



Buddhist thangka



Carved lacquer vase with dragons

Is America exceptional?

By Charles Zhu

As the US is so painfully entangled in the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, many are whispering the nation is on its decline.

It is time to rethink the country's role in world affairs, its philosophy and the messianic passion driving it.

Godfrey Hodgson, an associate fellow at the Rothermere American Institute of the University of Oxford, provides such a provocative insight into the US's "distorted and selective narrative of exceptional virtue" in *The Myth of American Exceptionalism* (221pp, Yale University Press, \$16.99).

Americans have long embraced a notion of superiority. Governor Winthrop of the Massachusetts Bay Colony advocated establishing "a city on a hill" to serve the world as a beacon of liberty. The American government has used Christian "divine ordination" and a rationale for imposing civilization and freedom in its most arrogant actions. Hodgson says the Bush administration used Christian zealotry to justify its war against terrorism, a war that seems more about establishing a new foothold in the oil-rich Middle East.

It is dangerous for the US to think it is destined to spread its version of democracy and capitalism to other countries, the author says. As a highly respected British commentator, Hodgson argues that America is not as exceptional as it thinks; its blind faith in its own history has given rise to a complacent nationalism and a disastrous unilateralist foreign policy that has isolated and alienated it from the global community—the Islamic world in particular.

Hodgson says the US is no longer exceptional in light of its global mission—"just one great, but imperfect country among others."

Based on a study of the development of America's high self esteem

from the early days of the republic to the present era, Hodgson shows how its exceptionalism has been systematically exaggerated. Though there have been distinct and original elements in America's history and political philosophy, these have always been heavily influenced by European thinkers.

Unsurprisingly, America is far less exceptional than it imagines, especially given its much lauded founding fathers were disciples of Locke, Hume, Montesquieu and Voltaire.

He argues, "what has been essentially a liberating set of beliefs has been corrupted over the past 30 years or so by hubris and self-interest into what is now a dangerous basis for national policy and for the international system."

Hodgson suggests that "19th-century America and 19th-century Europe were essentially two parts of the same progressive, liberal capitalist civilization" and America "replaced divine right, and hereditary right, and customary legitimacy, with the supreme authority of the people."

The American idea was "the last best hope of earth," US President Abraham Lincoln once declared. However, Hodgson argues "the thread of religious destiny in the pattern of American patriotism" was evident as a corrupting force beginning with Lincoln, and continued with Wilson and Reagan through Bush.

Hodgson's book enumerates the distortions of American ideas in recent decades. The triumphant end of the Cold War made its power unprecedentedly supreme, stimulating another wave of missionary impulse. Consequently, Hodgson argues, America is unique not for its virtues, but for its

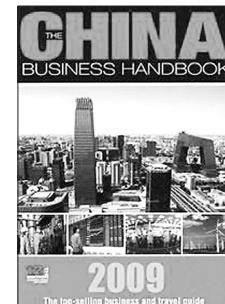
THE MYTH OF AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM



Godfrey Hodgson

CNPIEC Bookstore book listing

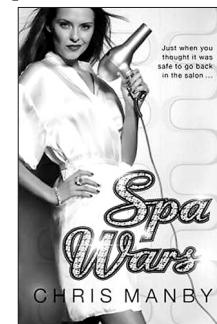
The China National Publication Import and Export Corporation's (CNPIEC) bookstore recommends these new arrivals to *Beijing Today* readers.



Chinese Business Handbook 2009

ACA Publishing Limited, 462pp, 270 yuan

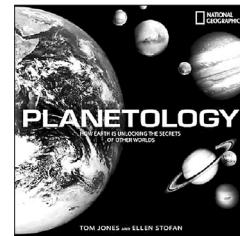
The book contains a comprehensive guide to every region of China—from the thriving coastal cities to the up-and-coming inland regions. The 2009 edition provides essential economic information about each province, supplemented by up-to-date maps, charts and tables. It details the key economic strengths and weaknesses of each region, along with the major companies and industrial zones.



Spa Wars

By Chris Manby, 310pp, 90 yuan

When Emily Brown's life and business is turned around by a surprise visit from Carina Lees, an immaculately-groomed reality TV star and Z-list celebrity, she cannot believe her luck. With just one member of her staff to help her out at her Essex salon, The Beauty Spot, Emily is pressed for time and money; but with Carina's patronage the subsequent financial success of the salon is ensured. However, with the assistance of the skilled-yet-shabby new girl Natalie, things start to go mysteriously wrong. It soon becomes clear that someone's got it in for the salon. And with tactics dirtier than a gardener's fingernails, the battle of the beauticians begins.



PLANETOLOGY: Unlocking the Secrets of the Solar System

By Tom Jones and Ellen Stofan, 224pp, 245 yuan

In a stunning and completely new view of the solar system, an astronaut and a geologist team up to investigate, through parallel perspectives made possible by cutting-edge space technology, how the earth itself can help science unravel the mysteries of the heavens.

(By He Jianwei)

Ten symbols of Hong Kong

By He Jianwei

"I hate" Hong Kong the way I would hate iron that cannot be made into steel," Edward Lam, a Hong Kong director, wrote in the preface of *Waiting for Hong Kong* (232pp, Zhejiang University Press, 26 yuan), his new book.

As a Hong Kong native, Lam watched the island's culture rise and fall over the last two decades. Today, he is pessimistic about Hong Kong's culture, which has been tainted by anti-intellectualism and cynicism.

In the book, he names 10 things that made Hong Kong great in the past. They are the reasons that "I can hardly make friends in Hong Kong," he says while meeting Beijing's readers.

Everything popular can reflect a human weakness. "Pop thrives on an individual's deficiency and indecision," he says.

Louis Cha, a novelist better known by his pen name Jin Yong, is first on Lam's list of what defines Hong Kong's culture. Cha's tales of chivalrous martial arts have a widespread following both on the Chinese mainland and throughout Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeast Asia.

Without Cha, Hong Kong's modern culture would not exist, Lam says. Most of the author's heroes started out as zeroes. "Hong Kong men are like Wei Xiaobao (a character in Cha's *The Duke of Mount Deer*). Both are ordinary people," he says.



Director Wong Jing is the second symbol of pop culture. Wong is a successful filmmaker—at least in commercial terms. He believes vulgarity is the most basic human instinct, and in his films, "no matter how ugly you are, many beauties will throw themselves at you. Ugliness is not important—the important thing is to know women's weaknesses," Lam says.

The Miss Hong Kong pageant has also led to an aesthetic appreciation of women beginning in the 1970s. "Women's appearance and value reflect male fantasy and taste," he says.

The pageant is organized by Television Broadcasts (TVB), Hong Kong's leading network. Its soap operas have been rated highly, and have taught Hong Kong people that they must climb to the

top no matter the cost.

Karaoke is the island's way to vent. The top songs at each KTV are sad: "The most miserable songs always have most clicks," he says.

The island's pop music has also influenced greater Chinese pop. Many of the "classic" Chinese songs are about the sorrow and disappointment of failings in love.

Besides martial arts fiction, romantic fiction is another important part of the Hong Kong literary landscape. Isabel Nee Yeh-su, known by her pen name Yi Shu, is a popular romance writer. "Yi and Jane Austin didn't write about love, but about dignity. Their romance novels became popular not because they are about romance, but because they are about security," Lam says.

The sixth symbol is director Wong Kar-Wai. Lam says Wong's films are so popular because of their depictions of sexual repression.

In the 1990s, four male singers prevailed in the pop music and became nicknamed the "Heavenly Kings." One of the singers, Andy Lau, is called the spirit of Hong Kong because of his forever youthful appearance and hard work.

The last three symbols are salesmanship, commercial radio and the *Apple Daily*, which is like *The Sun* in Britain.

But despite many things Lam sees as weaknesses in Hong Kong's culture, "I have a thirst for [its] better future," he says.



Magazines for every niche

By Wang Yu

"A career (in journalism) will make you rich and influential." For years, journalism professors have introduced the profession to new students as such. When the classes end, some students go on to become reporters and editors, writing the content we read every day – most do not.

But with independent publishing easier than ever, a third route has opened for many graduates. Independent magazines – free of advertising interests and the need to turn a profit – capture an idealism, lifestyle and attitude more in step with the new generation.

While these indie mags have readers everywhere in the country, they still remain a niche publication unable to compete with the corporate-backed mainstream. Then again, getting rich was never the goal.

Wang Jifan and his team are busy preparing for the tenth issue of *Rice* magazine, one of the most reputable and widely-spread independent quarterly magazines in Guangzhou. The new issue will feature a piece for the 10th anniversary of People Mountain People Sea, a Hong Kong music agency started by six musicians, producers and lyricists who make records, comic books and organize concerts for independent artists.

"We chose the topic because both the company and our magazine are celebrating an anniversary, and we share some ideas with them about the importance of original creations and how to create a niche audience," Wang says.

Wang recently became a reporter for a national magazine. But outside the office, he is the 25-year-old chief editor of *Rice*.

He never thought the magazine would still be running four years after its first issue. He and the rest of the *Rice* team fronted their own money to publish their first issue.

At that time, Wang was in his junior year at Sun Yat-Sen University in Guangzhou and had worked at the college paper and as an intern for a local media outlet. His passion for magazines convinced him to try making one of his own. The core team he gathered included six young students who had similar experience; but who were still "non-professionals."

"We were friends. We shared the same dream of making a

magazine, hoping to express ourselves in the pages. Most mainstream commercial things are not bad, but to me they are made by the older generation for younger readers – there is always a gap," Wang says.

Rice was designed so that each issue would have a theme, such as "My cup of tea," "Play alone" or "Secret love." Articles were written to fit around each respective theme, with the intent to mirror the album and track style arrangement seen in the music business.

But the magazine remembers its roots. Even though it has covered some of the top stars of the indie scene, "We still like to interview normal young people as we did in the beginning," Wang says. In the early days, *Rice* carried the stories of young record shop assistants, clothes stores and barber shops. Their binding characteristic was a rejection of conservative norms. For instance, one student worked in a clothes store for two years just to buy a Louis Vuitton bag.

"To him, getting that bag was a victory and dream he could achieve. A plain and traditional life doesn't work for many in the new generation who just want to live happily on their own," Wang says. Many of *Rice*'s stories resonate with like-minded young readers.

And that is the key to creating an independent magazine.

Amy Ju started *After 17*, a digital magazine, in April 2005 when she was just 23. She wanted to share her discovery of private photo-

graphs, especially those taken by women her age. Together with Madi, Nicole and Fan, who lived in Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Taiwan, Ju produced a magazine with a very touching series of sensitive photos.

"I was working at a commercial magazine. Although it was also aimed at the youth, we were not free to cover many of the topics we wanted to. Making a digital magazine offered a chance to break through those barriers," Ju says.

Two years later, *After 17* halted pro-

Ju says. This time, she invested her own money to publish and distribute the magazine. Most of the writers were experienced media workers who were doing it voluntarily.

From fashion to lifestyle, *Too* had varied content centered around an international view of pop culture. However, money and time problems killed the magazine after only one issue.

"A lot of people felt disappointed after *After 17* and *Too*. But to me, they were just different projects in my life, just like paintings for a painter. He'll never want to paint the same thing forever – it gets boring," Ju says.

"I wanted to create a Chinese version of *I-D* magazine when I was working on *Too*. I think the situation here is similar to Britain, where there are many new ideas coming out of the young generation. In Britain, these are covered by magazines like *I-D*, *The Face* and *Dazed&Confused*. But I don't want my magazine to be fast food. It takes a lot of time to learn and prepare for the next opportunity," Amy Ju says.

Most independent magazine creators will admit that money is a problem. But they never cave to business pressures so they can stay independent. *Rice* is only found in a handful of bookstores in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Taipei. Each issue prints about 6,000 copies, but that was still enough to attract sponsors and advertisers.

"Of course we want money to continue the magazine, and the

sponsors think highly of our reputation with young readers. But you always have to negotiate with them as most of these guys do not get it. One sponsor wanted us to publish an article about the *Super Girl* show, which is exactly what our readers reject. You can't risk losing readers for money," Wang Jifan says.

In the bookstores like One Way Street and Trends Lounge, readers can find similar independent magazines from Shanghai, Chengdu and other cities' young communities. Online shops like Taobao.com provide another option for magazine distribution.

Rice has published nine issues using the income from each issue plus a few advertisements to produce its next issue. The content must sell, because mainland readers are unwilling to tolerate a sea of small-print traditional characters which Wang says are needed to reach audiences in other Chinese communities.

Aside from the core team, reporters and editors at *Rice* come and go. Those looking for money are the first to leave, because no one at *Rice* is getting rich.

"That's also why we've got through the troubles so far. People came to us talking about business models. We don't have one. It was always surprised them, while it has always made me relax. Without a business model, we don't face any financial pressure. No one is depending on *Rice* for his livelihood," Wang says.



Weekend seafood shopping at Jingshen market



Entrance of the seafood market

A busy market

Most sections of the market are devoted to large-scale, wholesale purchases, so keep your expectations low in terms of a clean shopping environment as it can get a little messy in there.

The retail vendors converge on the first floor of a three-floor building located at the center of the market, where you can find most of popular kinds of seafood. Crawfish are placed in different tanks according to their size, and various types of conches, clams and sea crabs are kept in basins. Flounder and sturgeons float in the aquariums, peering idly through the glass.

Some outdoor stalls are lined along the other side of the building, with a motley array of live sea creatures. Every stall is crowded with customers asking prices, making their selections and bargaining.

Shiquanfang snack town is located on the third floor, where you can have seafood you just bought prepared. You can also ask for a shopping guide there, who will bargain and help you buy seafood. The prices of preparing different seafood and different ways of cooking it are posted on wall. Various cooking methods are available, including Guangdong, Fujian and Dalian styles.

There are also some restaurants on the other side of the street outside the market, which provide seafood-processing service at an even lower price.

Jingshen seafood market

Where: Jingshen Seafood Market 232 Shiliuzhuang Xi Jie, Fengtai district
Open: 7 am – 8 pm, but you should go as early as possible to catch the bustle.

Shiquanfang snack town opens between 11 am – 9 pm. The restaurant is always crowded especially on weekends. Reserved rooms fee is 30 yuan. Tel: 8728 0248

How to get there

Take subway Line 5 and get off at Songjiazhuang station. Come out from Gate A, and you will see a bus stop on the right side. Take 511 and get off at Guangcui Lu Nankou. The entrance of the market is on the other side of the road. You can also take a motor tricycle to get there from subway station at the price of 5 yuan.

If you drive there, head 1.5 kilometers to the south of Zhaogongkou Qiao, South Third Ring Road. The parking fee inside market is 2 yuan per hour for a car or 4 yuan per hour for a van.



Scallop 2-3 yuan each

By Wang Dong

Jingshen is the ideal place to go for seafood lovers. At the largest wholesale seafood market in Beijing, you can find anything: crabs, crawfish, fish and clams both from China's coast and abroad. Jingshen offers better prices and quality than any other supermarkets in town.

For this article, Beijing Today's scoured the market in order to bring you the varieties of seasonal seafood available this month.



Chinese spiny lobster 100-140 yuan/500 grams



Sea crab 25 yuan/500 grams

- ### How to select good seafood
- Beijing Today* talked to some vendors, asking for their tips in selecting quality seafood.
- Drain the water away to decrease the weight considerably.
 - A scale for weight verification is at the end of corridor on the first floor.
 - Whole scallops, oysters and abalones can be shucked on request.
 - Ask for water and oxygen to be put in the bag to keep your seafood alive on the way home.
 - When buying seashells: pick the closed ones or tap the open shells. They are still alive if they can close.
 - When picking shrimp or lobsters: choose the one with full legs and that struggle hard. Those with big heads and small bodies should be avoided.
 - When choosing fresh fish: Look for fish with clear eyes and bright red gills.
 - Do not wear shoes you cherish. Remember to bring hand wipes.



Sea urchin 5 yuan each

Photos by Wang Dong

Reference price

Scallop 2-3 yuan each
Oyster 2.5-3 yuan each
Sea cucumber 15 yuan each
King of razor clam 5 yuan each
Pen shell 5-8 yuan each
Abalone 5-12 each
Sea snail 20 yuan/500g
Pacific Geoduck clam 50-70 yuan/500g
Atlantic surf clam 15 yuan/box
Undulate venus 28 yuan/500 grams
Spoon worm 10 yuan/500 grams
Sea crab 25 yuan/500 grams
Dungeness Crab 50-60 yuan/500 grams
Grouper 25 yuan/500 grams
Sturgeon 23 yuan/500 grams
Turbot 25-35 yuan/500 grams
Mantis shrimp frozen: 25 yuan each (male), 35 yuan each (female); fresh: 85 yuan/500 grams
Japanese spiny lobster 160 yuan/500 grams
Australia spiny lobster 230 yuan/500 grams
Crayfish 10-14 yuan/500 grams
White leg shrimp 30-35 yuan/500 grams
Conch 28 yuan/500 grams
Chinese mitten crab 35 yuan/500 grams
Cuttlefish 30 yuan/500 grams
Fillet of salmon 30 yuan/500 grams (frozen) 40 yuan/500 grams (fresh)



Mantis shrimp 25 yuan/500 grams

Latvian coffee is indeed for connoisseurs

By Annie Wei

For those in need of another spacious and quiet café in Sanlitun, the opening of Double Coffee at The Village is welcome news.

Until recently, finding a cafe to sit down and work on a laptop was easy. Now it's impossible. Places offering coffee on the first floor of The Village have been taken over by shoppers, tourists and noisy families with children.

Luckily, the Double Coffee, on the third floor, not only has two indoor floors, but a nice patio area with umbrellas and tables outside. Each table inside has a plug and free Wi-Fi.

Double Coffee's aims differ from those of the other cafe chains in town. Since Starbucks, entered the market 10 years ago, along with other brands like Pacific Coffee and Costa's recent arrivals in Beijing, they have come to offer patrons many things: coffee take-away, breakfast, freelancers' offices and half-business-half-casual meeting rooms.

The Double Coffee tries to do more. In addition to what the other chains offer, Double Coffee has bar counters and cocktails. It has a restaurant-style menu, from coffee, salad, pasta, main courses to desserts. Things are not cheap, however. For example, claiming to be the pinnacle of coffee, a cup costs from 25 to 38 yuan. The English Web site of Double Coffee said they serve 50 kinds of coffee, but that does not seem to be the case here.

The good thing is it has many kinds of breakfast and lunch, like Duke Jacobs potato crepe (34 yuan). The dishes are tasty, but come in small portions. Cocktails range from 38 yuan to 48 yuan, but are mediocre. The wait staff is very friendly.

But as the quality of dining in Beijing increases year after year, so does the competition. Any restaurant or cafe has to work hard and be creative in order to succeed. Double Coffee, while quiet, is nothing exceptional.

Double Coffee

Where: S3-31, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – midnight
Tel: 6417 2182

New



Small Cappuccino, 25 yuan



Double Coffee at The Village

Photos by Yu Tingmei

1,000

year-old Chinese cuisine

By Annie Wei

Moyu'er restaurant deserves a lot credit for the novel gesture of its devotion – serving food based on recipes which date back to the Song Dynasty (960 -1279).

Xiao Bo, a former media publisher-turned restaurant owner, has a passion for all things Song Dynasty, which he describes as "the most splendid period of Chinese culture" in terms of literature, theater, drama and dining.

Xiao and his cooks prepare food from five recipes written during the Song Dynasty. Four of them were from Southern Song, a period after the Song lost control of northern China to the Jin Dynasty.

There are quite a few highly recommended dishes. Lianfang yubao (steamed fish mash and lotus seeds in lotus seedpod) is a must, as it is only available from now to the mid August while lotus is in season.

Huangjinji (steamed chicken) also comes highly recommended. A whole chicken, cleaned and stuffed into an earthenware pot, is then soaked in a full bottle of huadiao, high-grade yellow rice wine, with other ingredients like Chinese red pepper mixed in and slowly steamed for five hours. Finely crushed salt is placed in the steel pot to help conduct heat. The result? Chicken that tastes just right – tender, full of rice wine fragrance and natural flavor.

Xiao says that huadiao was the most commonly used ingredient for cooking in the Song Dynasty, as baijiu was not popular back then.

Another delectable selection is the xiangiacheng (steamed crab meat in orange). Tender crab meat is sautéed in cream, placed into an orange and steamed. Its flavor is delicate and complex: sweet, then a bit sour and then sweet.

The cuisines between the Northern Song and Southern Song, except when the Song court moved from Kaifeng to Hangzhou, were very similar, Xiao says.

New



Huangjinji,
Moyu'er's star dish



Backyard garden

Photos by Xiao Bo

The move, however, allowed for the introduction of different ingredients, like more fresh vegetables.

None of the dishes served in Moyu'er have MSG. "There was no such a thing back in Song Dynasty," Xiao said, "Not even tomatoes or peppers, which were introduced to China after middle-Ming Dynasty."

But Chinese people back then used a lot of herbs, like mint and leeks, in their dishes. One of Moyu'er's desserts is to cut a grape into halves, then stuff it with a little bit of peppermint and sweet melon. An unusual combination, it is crisp and sweet with a subtle kick.

Although Moyu'er is conveniently located on the corner of a red building at Zhongjianzixiang, a hutong close to Yugongyishan, it is not easy to find as there are not any obvious signs. Its business (and its success) depend on word-of-mouth.

The restaurant has a lovely courtyard with six dining rooms, each named after the most famous Song colleges.

Customers must call in advance and there are three set prices: 100, 200 and 300 per person. For dishes like lianfang yubao, it's above the 200 yuan order.

Moyu'er

Where: 8 Zhongjianzi Xiang, Dongcheng District
Open: 11 am – late at night
Tel: 6403 3309

Fresh soft-serve ice cream at Cherry House

By Wang Yu

Summer is never truly complete without ice cream.

For those in search of a special treat, make a trip to Soho Shangdu. Filled with bars, restaurants and luxury-item stores, Cherry House is the CBD's hidden gem.

Cherry House's pink themed décor manages to be both sophisticated and cozy. The walls are covered in elaborate tiled mosaics, and while small, the shop offers glass tables and seats to customers in need of a rest after shopping.

While the decoration is noteworthy, we should let the ice cream do the talking. Liu Xia, manager of the shop, says the brand itself was imported from America, as were its the methods of making and serving the ice cream. At Cherry House, eating and selecting ice cream takes the form of an incredible ice cream buffet.

Once you have selected your bowl, you have your choice of eight flavors including original, vanilla, coffee, chocolate, strawberry, mango, melon and banana.

But it does not end with the ice cream. The shop offers eighteen kinds of toppings such as smashed cookies, dried fruit, and candy to help you creating your own personalized dish. The frozen yogurt in Cherry House is light and fat free, but its creamy texture and rich flavors definitely leave you guessing.

The price of the soft-serve in Cherry House is based according to weight at a rate of 9.9 yuan for every 100 grams. The shop offers take-away, but we suggest you eat your ice cream as soon as possible.

Cherry House's new branch at Solana will open in late August.

Cherry House

Where: 2126, north tower, Soho Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao, Chaoyang District
Open: 9:30 am – 8:30 pm
Tel: 5900 2459
Cost: 9.9 yuan for 100 grams



New
Cherry icecream costs 9.9 yuan per 100 g.



To choose your flavor. Photos by Liu Bo

InMusic Festival kicks off this weekend

By Wang Yu
Today marks the first day of the InMusic Festival, a new music series concert brand started by InMusic, one of the most influential music and culture magazines in China.

Located in the Zhangbei Grassland, Hebei Province, the event brings together a diverse collection of musicians, including British Trip-Hop legend Tricky, Swedish rock icon The Soundtrack of Our Lives (TSOOL), Little Dragon and local rock hero Xu Wei. With entertainment of all kinds the InMusic Festival is sure to be the highlight of this summer. And there's more than just music in store:

The Perfect Summer Getaway

Only a two hours' drive from Beijing, the Zhangbei grassland is closest opportunity you will have to experience the Mongolian grasslands. Covering an area of over 200 square kilometers, the vast landscape offers a rich variety of local wildlife and traditions, not to mention a break from the sweltering Beijing heat.

Star Power: Trip-hop legend Tricky, Swedish rock giant TSOOL, and many more

Sixty domestic and international acts will grace the festival's stages over three days, filling the expansive festival grounds with a range of great music from around the world. Headliners Tricky and Xu Wei will be joined by a host of great artists from China and abroad, including The Soundtrack of Our Lives (Sweden), Little Dragon (Sweden), Snake and Jet's Amazing Bullit Band (Denmark), Xie Tianxiao and Zuoxiao Zuzhou.

Entertainment: Beyond Music

Though the stages will provide the main source of entertainment, the festival will also provide activities such as horseback riding and kite-flying. The InMusic Festival Rock Football Invitational Tournament, which gives fans a chance to challenge their favorite artists at soccer, is yet another unique and exciting feature of the festival. The iMart marketplace and outdoor cinema are also available.



Music for Your Belly

You can't rock on an empty stomach, and so the Festival aims to offer an assortment of culinary options. The Zhangbei Grasslands are home to legendary lamb, sweet potatoes and corn, the specialty of the

InMusic Festival menu. For those desiring more of the usual festival fare, chefs from Chongqing, Taiwan and elsewhere will be cooking up Chinese cuisine and, of course, the must — have barbecue.

InMusic Festival

Where: Zhangbei Grassland, Zhangbei County, Hebei Province
When: August 7, 8, 9

Admission: 120/single day, 175/two days, 220/three days (including shuttle tickets); 80/single day; 135/two days; 180/three days (not including shuttle tickets)

Traffic: All shuttles start from Beijiao bus station located near the Line 10 Jiandemen Station, A30, Huayan Bei Li, Chaoyang District. Shuttles to Zhangbei Grassland depart at 10 am — 4 pm, return at 1 pm — 1 am next day

Tel: 800 810 1887, 400 810 1887

6

Exhibition Seek Truth From Facts — Liu Heung Shing Photography 1973-83

Where: Three Shadows Photography Art Center, 115A Caochangdi, Cuigezhuang, Chaoyang District

When: Until September 19, daily except Monday, 10 am — 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 6432 2663

Kwon Doo Hyoun's solo exhibition (Photo)

Where: Gallery Artside Beijing, Space 2, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until August 30, daily except Monday, 10 am —

7 pm

Saturday, August 8

Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9192

Movie Home

Where: 5/F Wenjin Hotel, Tsinghua Science Park, Haidian District

When: 4:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6252 5566

Nightlife Cold Fairyland

Where: Star Live, 3/F, 79 Hepingli Xi Jie, Dongcheng District

When: 8:30 pm
Admission: 60 yuan
Tel: 6425 5677

Bye Bye Summer Concert

Say goodbye to summer together on the first day after Lìqiū, the 13th "solar term"

5

Friday, August 7

Exhibition Speak Describe — 2009 Cross-

Strait Contemporary Art

This large-scale contemporary art exhibition is among the first of its kind, resulting from a close collaboration between both Chinese and Taipei art museums. The focus of the exhibition is men of the modern cultural context, with the deduction and display of the relationship between men and their environment in full view.

Where: National Art Museum of China, 1 Wusi Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: Until August 13, daily, 9 am — 5 pm

Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 6400 6326

Photography group exhibition

Where: Aura Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until August 20, daily except Monday, 10 am — 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9280

Movie



A Scene at the Sea

Where: MoBox Books Life, 288 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District
When: 7 pm
Admission: 10 yuan
Tel: 8261 8538

Nightlife

Where: Hot Cat Club, 46 Fangjia Hutong, Dongcheng District
When: 9 pm
Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 13207597181

Funk Soul Brothers

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-1 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District
When: 9:30 pm
Admission: 50 yuan
Tel: 6404 2711

of the lunar calendar meaning "beginning autumn."

Where: Fengzheng Dajie, Jianwai SOHO, 39 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 1:30 pm
Admission: Free



Sunday, August 9

Exhibition Landscape – Contemporary Photography Group

Exhibition

Where: 798 Photo Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until September 11, daily except Monday, 10 am — 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 6438 1784

Object – image, nature

"Object-image, nature" is a photography exhibition that deconstructs conventions with regard to politics and war, plac-

ing them in the realm of performance. Edgy and thought-provoking, the artists use exaggeration and satire to shake up their images.

Where: Thread Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until September 4, daily except Monday, 10 am — 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9667

Nightlife

Mikuni Shimokawa First Meeting in Beijing

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie,

Dongcheng District

When: 5 pm
Admission: 130 yuan
Tel: 6402 5080

Top Guitar Concert

Where: Star Live, 3/F, 79 Hepingli Xi Jie, Dongcheng District

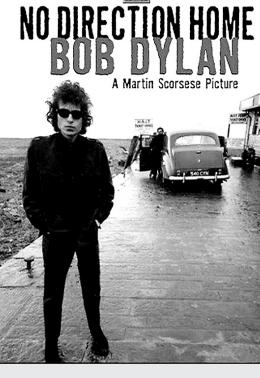
When: 8 pm
Admission: 50 yuan
Tel: 6425 5677

Movie

No Direction Home: Bob Dylan

Where: No 3 Club, inside the courtyard of Beijing Qingyun Company, 300 meters west of Lianxiang Bridge, Beisanhuan, Haidian District

When: 2 pm
Admission: 15 yuan
Tel: 8211 5288



Upcoming

Nightlife

Shu De Shou Hu (Trees' Guardianship) — Pumi minority's music and culture
Where: Penghao Theater, 35 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: August 10, 7:50 pm
Admission: 50 yuan; 30 yuan for students
Tel: 6400 6472

Stage in September

Concert

Roland Batik Solo Concert

Where: Forbidden City Music Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), Dongcheng District
When: September 11, 7:30 pm

Admission: 30-380 yuan
Tel: 6559 8306

Bach Cycle – Sheng Yuan Piano 2

Where: Forbidden City Music Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), Dongcheng District
When: September 18, 7:30 pm

Admission: 30-380 yuan
Tel: 6559 8306

China National Symphony Orchestra Performing Season – Opening Concert

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
When: September 3, 7:30 pm

Admission: 80-500 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Lucerne Festival in Beijing 2009

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
When: September 20-25, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-1,580 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Concert on Opera: "Madama Butterfly"

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
When: September 12, 7:30 pm

Admission: 50-400 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

Broadway Musical Cats

Where: Beijing Exhibition Center, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District
When: September 19-27, 7:30 pm

Admission: 280-1,180 yuan
Tel: 6835 1592

Splendid Indian Musical: Merchants of Bollywood

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: September 25-29, 7:30 pm

Admission: 80-2,009 yuan
Tel: 5166 3124

Large-scale Shanxi Zarzuela: Liberation

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
When: September 1-7, 7:30 pm

Admission: 80-400 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

(By Jackie Zhang)

Traditional ways to beat the heat

By Zhao Hongyi

Summers in Beijing used to be easy due to the city's latitude and elevation, but that was before global warming. In addition to a global rise in temperature, Beijing is grappling with more buildings, air-conditioners, cars and people, as a result, people are looking for the recipe for a hot and muggy day.

But retreating behind air-conditioned walls is not the only way to keep cool when downtown. Beijingers have been finding ways to stay cool long before air-conditioning, and many of those ways were far friendlier to the environment.

Chong Mian, a doctor of traditional Chinese medicine, suggests the following traditional ways to cool down.

1. Drinks

Soda and other carbonated beverages are very new. Before these, people were cooling down and fighting dehydration with chrysanthemum tea. The tea, made by steeping dried chrysanthemum flowers, is especially good for people stuck at the computer all day. Traditional medicine links the flower to liver and eye health.

Ancient people would also make tea out of baked barley. It was popular in rural areas, where many could not afford or lacked access to real chrysanthemum tea. Barley tea has a unique taste and can make you feel energetic. It is still popular in Japan and South Korea, where it is used as a digestive.

Also popular for staying cool was suanmeitang, a sour plum drink. It was first produced in southern China and later brought to the north. Before its arrival in the north, people made tea from fresh or dried crabapples, which also curbed diseases like hypertension and hyperlipidemia, an excess of fat in the blood.

Many other fruits and herbs can be used to make tea in the summer. Just be sure to check whether they can have a secondary negative effect on your health. Consider asking a traditional pharmacist for help with which herbs are most appropriate.

2. Soup

Ancient Chinese made many kinds of soups during summer. Mung bean soup can help you cool down and sleep. Ormosia soup, made from a kind of legume, can help expel toxins. White gourd soup is eaten with rice for a cool summer meal. It can boost your appetite and reduce phlegm and fever. But more importantly, it will not put on the pounds.

Mung beans and ormosia are cheap and easy to prepare at home every day.

3. Exercise

Ancient people agreed that strenuous exercise is no good during hot days, but light exercise to induce perspiration can be beneficial-assuming you keep yourself hydrated.

The most popular exercise in the past was weight-lifting. People used to lift heavy stone dumbbells in the shade near a river. It was a group contest for young and strong men in which nearby kids and old people would gather to act as referees.

Swimming was also popular, but unlike many modern people's idea of the sport, it actually involved moving. Simply going and soaking in a pool to cool down is no good. Swimming is supposed to be an aerobic exercise

that works your muscles and lungs. People used to swim in ponds and rivers, the latter of which meant fighting the current. If you are going to get in the water, then you should be prepared to move.

Walking was and still is a habit of elderly Beijingers, especially after dinner. For more exercise, they walked briskly or until they broke a sweat. Many liked to walk with their children or grandchildren.

Regardless of how you exercise, it is important to wash afterward. Even on a hot summer day, it is better to wash with hot water. Cold showers were considered bad for your health, and are still shunned today.

4. Cool off

Cool down in places with fresh air which are out of direct sunlight. In Chinese, this practice is called "na liang," or taking in the cool. Popular places to na liang have been parks, the banks or rivers, alleys and under trees. Old people chatted with each other, parents told stories to their kids, children played and young adults would be looking for love. Na liang is more a social exchange than just sitting on your butt in a cool place.

But with everyone living in high-rise apartment buildings, fans and air conditioners have become substitutes for this human interaction. But the courtyards and hallways of most buildings are still full of people-usually older-looking-to continue the tradition of na liang.

5. Relax

Staying calm and relaxed is as important to one's health as anything, especially when temperatures are at their highest. Take things easy and avoid overworking. Summer is an ideal time to relax and read. Eat more fresh vegetables like salads, as well as lighter foods like fish, eggs, soy products and fruit, all of which are plentiful in summer. Follow the season's supply and demand and avoid eating oily or fried foods.

6. Sleep more

Chinese doctors suggest people take a nap after lunch. This is even more important in summer, as you exhaust more energy. The length of nap can be flexible, just as long as you can awake feeling refreshed and energetic.

Do not use it as an excuse to stay up later! Go to bed early in the evening and get up as early as possible. Chinese people believe that regardless of whether your work is housework or office work, it should be done during the coolest hours of the day.



CFP Photo

Architectural beauties and old tales from Simatai

More than hiking on Great Wall



The Fourth Tower



The Fifth Tower



The Sixth Tower



The Seventh Tower

Photos provided by thegreatwall.com.cn

Simatai Great Wall, "The best of the best"

Simatai Great Wall stretches from Simatai, the north of Miyun County, to Jinshanling, the border between Beijing and Hebei Province. Originally built during the Northern Qi dynasty (550-577), it was rebuilt in the Hongwu years of the Ming dynasty by the military general Qi Jiguang. Spanning 6.6 kilometers, it is only a little more than half the length of Badaling. However, it has 35 beacon towers, compared to Badaling's 43.

The Simatai section of the Great Wall is renowned for its inclusion of all of the Great Wall's most prominent characteristics: classical artistry as well as the engineering necessary to overcome such steep terrain. Luo Zhewen, a Wall specialist, has said "The Great Wall is the best of the Chinese buildings, and Simatai is the best of the Great Wall."

When it comes to which section of the Great Wall, more and more foreigners are choosing to trek Simatai. But few know the secrets of the towers, each of which presents a different function and structural characteristic. So there is a lot to discover in the 4-hour hike.

The Simatai section was built mainly in late 16th century of the mid-Ming Dynasty. Since it was close to the imperial capital, the Great Wall constructors used all kinds of techniques to ensure it would be impossible for nomads to seize control. This answers why it has been perceived as a living museum of Great Wall construction techniques. At Simatai, in every tiny detail there are stories and history.

Towers on the western side

Simatai Great Wall is separated by a valley into eastern and western parts. The western part rests on rolling hills with about 20 well-preserved watchtowers dotting the wall.

The trek itself begins with the First Tower, which is also the steepest. Erected from a reservoir in the valley, its slope is dauntingly steep. But with the advantage of this location and profile, the tower was seen as one of the ideal places for defending.

The Second Tower is unique in that it can only be entered from a door that is high above the ground. People can only enter the door through the ladder. The approach was used as a defensive strategy, meaning enemy troops would not be able to climb up. Coincidentally, tourists today will encounter a similar problem, as there is no ladder available for those wishing to climb up.

Most of the buildings on the Great Wall were constructed out of bricks, but some, including the Fourth and the Sixth Tower, used wooden beams and pillars inside. The use of timber has its advantages: it's light-weight and flexible material, but it is also easily destroyed. Nowadays, it is rare to find wood in the tower. Steel has been used to strengthen the brick walls and effectively protect and support the building in its place.

Both the Fifth and the Sixth Tower are partly collapsed, so while worth a look, visitors are advised not to climb them.

Scripts can be found on the wall which record the years they were constructed. On the Seventh and Twelfth Towers' steles read "Built in the Fourth Year of Longqing (1570)" and "Built in the Six Year of Wanli (1578)."

Continued on page 21...

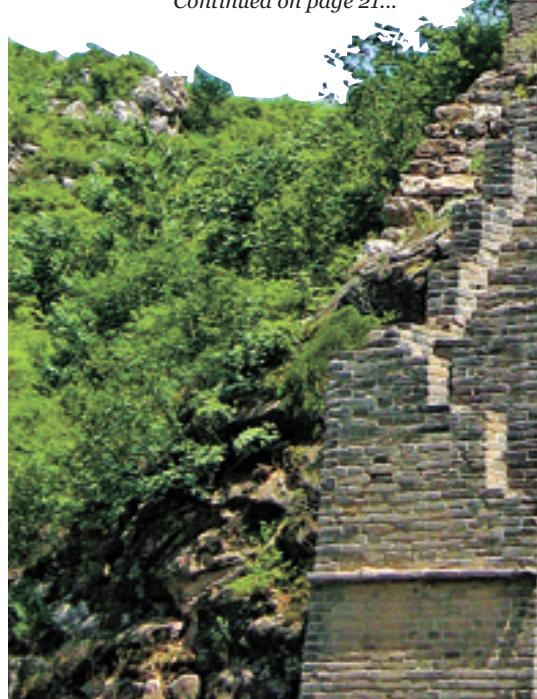
By Zhang Dongya

The Badaling Great Wall might attract the most tourists, but, more and more people nowadays prefer to tour more "wild" sections of Great Wall. Rugged, unrestored Simatai is one of the few to retain the original features of the Ming Dynasty Great Wall.

90 Percent Travel Agency, which aims to provide its clients with an authentic Beijing experience, offers a hike on Simatai Great Wall. Dubbed as the "museum" of Great Wall architectural art, Simatai offers visitors insights into structural and design elements of the Great Wall that cannot be seen in other areas.



The First Tower on the eastern side



Simatai is renowned for its inclusion of all of the Great Wall's prominent characteristics.

Photos provided by 90 Percent Travel



The Eleventh Tower



Simatai's eastern section is much steeper, and it is closed to the public for safety reasons.



The Fourteenth Tower Photos provided by thegreatwall.com.cn

... continued from page 20

If you look carefully enough, you can also find bricks stamped with the date on which they were made and the code numbers of the armies that made them. Bricks at the Twelfth Tower read "Built in the Sixth Year of Wanli (1578) by Zhenwu Battalion." Many inscribed bricks can be found from the Eleventh to the Fourth Tower, and all of the inscriptions were carved onto the bricks prior to being fired in the kiln. These inscribed bricks record how the Great Wall was built by troops from different provinces all across China, including Shandong, Hebei, Jiangxi and Ningxia.

The Thirteenth Tower is famous for its *yingbi*, or screen wall with a Kirin, a mythical beast said to bring good fortune, so it is also called Kirin Tower. The image is well-preserved, and decorated with pearls and jewels, ancient currency and corals.

The interior of the Thirteenth Tower, with its ornate interior, is pre-

sumed to be the place where military officials stationed.

Since lots of the Great Wall builders were from the southern regions, like Zhejiang Province, some of the towers' construction features characteristics unique to Jiangnan, the area along the southern Yangtze River.

Homesick towers on border

The first fourteen towers are in Beijing, but the trip still covers another seven towers on the border between Beijing and Hebei Province. The most famous towers occupying the border section are the Seventeenth and the Eighteen Tower and were built by southern soldiers.

When the general Qi Jiguang was reassigned from the south to the north, he found that soldiers in the north were undisciplined and lacking of fighting strength, so he transferred as many as 3,000 soldiers from south, mainly from modern-day Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces, as the main forces. And they did not disappoint.

The two towers on the border were

constructed by these southern soldiers, and as such were given the names Big Jinshan Tower and Small Jinshan Tower. These were named after two islands – Big Jinshan Island and Small Jinshan Island in their hometown Zhejiang, Jiangsu Province – as an expression their homesickness.

Fairytales on the eastern side

Simatai's eastern section is much steeper, following a more rugged terrain that includes cliff edges and kilometer-high peaks. As a result, it is closed to the public for safety reasons, so the trip stops after hiking on its west line and border section. But the guide will offer you enjoyable old tales of its towers.

Watchtowers are closely spaced and provide spectacular views. Main attractions in the eastern part include Watching Beijing Tower, Fairy Tower, Heavenly Ladder and Sky Bridge.

Watching Beijing Tower, or Wangjing in Chinese, is regarded as the summit of the Simatai Great Wall, as well as the

highest cultural relic in Beijing. Its name comes from how at night, assuming good visibility, one can see the lights of Beijing shimmering in the distance 120 kilometers away. More stamped bricks can also be found at the tower.

Another tower, called Fairy Tower, has a sculpture of twin lotus flowers above its arched doors and is considered by many to be the most beautiful among all the towers.

One thing worth mentioning is the role goats played in building the Great Wall, particularly this section. Centuries ago, on such a precarious mountain ridge, goats were found to be much more adept than horses or donkeys at carrying bricks to the top. Legend has it that Fairy Tower was the dwelling place for a goat, who having fallen in love with a shepherd, was reincarnated in the form of an angel.

Travel Information

Agency: 90 Percent Travel

Cost: 290 yuan

Package includes:

English-speaking guide

Transportation

Admission

Water, fruits and snacks

Travel insurance

Tel: 5962 6850, 15117916648

Email: info@90percenttravel.com

Basic itinerary:

1. Meet in front of Oriental Kenzo at the southeast corner of Dongzhimen Bridge.
2. Arrive at Simatai Great Wall, which

includes a hike through more than 20 watch towers featuring different architectural styles and histories.

3. Locate the bricks with Chinese characters.

4. Gain a better understanding of the Great Wall.

Notes: The trip starts at noon and lasts four to five hours. Fortunately, Beijing is in its rainy season, so heat should not be an issue. Also, due to its higher elevation, do not forget to use sun block and wear a hat.

Simatai is one of the few sections to retain the original features of the Ming Dynasty Great Wall.

Photos provided by 90 Percent Travel



Editor: Zhang Dongya Designer: Yang Gen

Arabian dishes for a 1001 nights

By Wang Yu

Since the mid-1990s, 1001 Nights has built a reputation in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Yiwu for its authentic Arabian food, which is popular with local diners.

A month ago, the Syrian restaurant opened another branch at Solana shopping mall. "Unlike our Sanlitun branch, guests here are mostly Chinese," Achraf Ghanem, the restaurant's manager, said.

The food provided in the restaurant is all Halal food. Its executive chef Hasan is a master of

the art of Muslim cuisine. "Arabian people must have hummus before their main dish," Ghanem said. The restaurant offers a variety of appetizers including hummus with meat (35 yuan single; 68 yuan double) and hummus bu taino (25 yuan for a single order; 48 yuan double). Hummus is best enjoyed with bread (5 yuan for three pieces).

1001 Nights serves eight kinds of kebab and a variety of meat dishes ranging from mild to very spicy. It also serves hot fish (98 yuan) and the popular Syrian leg of lamb (198 yuan).



The 1001 Nights salad (35 yuan single; 68 yuan double), with tomatoes, olives and beans, is an ideal choice for vegetarians.

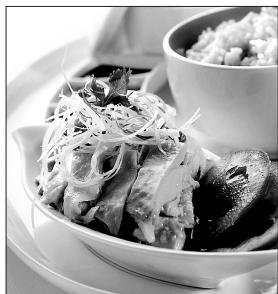
The restaurant offers a lunch buffet for 68 yuan from 11:30 am

to 3:30 pm.

From 7:30 pm till midnight, customers are entertained with traditional belly dancing. Guests can watch the show while smoking a hookah.

1001 Nights

Where: Solana, 6 Chaoyang Park Road, Chaoyang District
Open: 11 am – 2 am next day
Tel: 5905 6316; 5905 6317; 5905 6318



Singaporean Month

Indulge yourself in a month of Singaporean-themed dishes prepared by excellent chefs. Specialties include chili crab, banana leaf curry, Singapore-Hainanese chicken rice, Kaya toast and Laksa accompanied with Singapore slings.

Where: CBD International Cuisine & Yao Chi Cantonese Restaurant, Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuai Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until August 31
Tel: 6530 9383

Lobster promotion



Da Giorgio will feature lobster fresh from Boston, prepared delicately with seasonal ingredients. Chef Giovanni will showcase his culinary expertise as he presents signature lobster dishes created using a range of cooking methods.

Where: Grand Hyatt Beijing, Beijing Oriental Plaza, 1 Dong Chang'an Jie, Dongcheng District

When: Until August 31, 5:30-10 pm
Tel: 8518 1234 ext. 3628

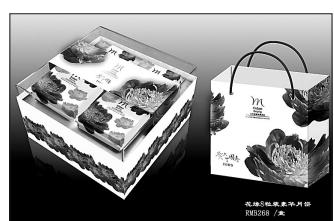
Memorable Ramadan

Providing an ideal venue for activities during Islam's holy month, The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing has prepared special

menus for Ramadan. With proper equipment and Halal-certified ingredients, the hotel's experienced Muslim chefs are honored to prepare a wide selection of international Muslim dishes for you and your guests.

Where: The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing, 10 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: August 20 – September 19
Cost: 248 yuan per person for groups of 50 or more
Tel: 6590 5566 ext. 2165



Mid-Autumn Festival

To celebrate the forthcoming traditional Mid-Autumn Festival, Grand Mercure Xidan Beijing presents an exquisite moon cake collection. An ideal present for business partners, friends and family.

Make an early-bird purchase by the end of the month for a special discount. Call for bulk-order discounts if you plan to purchase more than 500 boxes.

Where: Grand Mercure Xidan Beijing, 6 Xuanwumen Nei Dajie, Xicheng District

Cost: 158 yuan (four-piece Special Moon Cake), 268 yuan (eight-piece Deluxe Moon Cake)
Tel: 6603 6688 ext. 8312

Afternoon tea

Say goodbye to dull afternoon teas and try three types of champagnes or sparkling wines, fine specialty teas and delectable sweets like strawberries dipped in chocolate, profiteroles filled with vanilla cream and fresh strawberries, smoked duck breast in a mango wrap and chocolate praline.

Where: Shangri-La's Kerry Centre, 1 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Saturdays and Sundays, 2-5:30 pm

Cost: 98 yuan; 158 yuan with sparkling wine; 198 yuan with champagne

Tel: 6561 8833 ext. 42

One East Business Lunch

Visit One East this month for an unforgettable modern American lunch. Enjoy a two-course set menu featuring the best contemporary American Cuisine in Beijing, or a three-course menu.

Where: One East, Hilton Beijing, 1 Dongfang Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until August 31, 12 am – 2:30 pm
Cost: 100 yuan (two-course menu); 130 yuan (three-course menu); all prices subject to 15 percent surcharge
Tel: 5865 5030



The great PENTA summer sale

PENTA, Hilton Beijing Wangfujing's fifth floor collection of restaurants and bars, is having a summer sale. Enjoy a 50 percent discount on the signature smoothies and luscious ice creams and cakes in all of its restaurants and bars.

Start your visit at The Library, which offers a wide array of cakes and pastries ready to nibble on. Smoothies and ice cream abound at Vasco's and Chynna, where Portugal's well-known Serradura Ice Cream is a favorite.

Where: Hilton Beijing Wangfujing, 8 Wangfujing Dong Jie, Dongcheng District

When: until August 31
Tel: 5812 8888 ext. 8411

New executive Chef

Jean-Baptiste Mendiant has been appointed as the new executive chef of Justine's at the Jianguo Hotel Beijing. His appointment marks the beginning of cooperation between the hotel and the famous Rothschild Group.

Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts opens in Maldives

In celebration of its opening, Shangri-La's Villingili Resort and Spa, Maldives is offering an exclusive package. Guests can enjoy seven nights for the price of five. The offer includes benefits such as return domestic flight transfers from Male to Gan, daily half-board and a CHI experience for two. Guests looking for a shorter break can enjoy a complimentary night when paying for a three-night stay.

When: Until October 31
Tel: (960) 689 7888

New manager of Le Pre Lenotre

Sofitel Wanda Beijing is pleased to name Damien Alvarez as the new manager of Le Pre Lenotre French Gastronomic Restaurant. Alvarez, a French national, has worked internationally in the hospitality industry, predominantly in the food and beverage sector. He started his career with Sofitel hotels and became assistant restaurant manager of Sofitel Paris Bercy. He later came to China and joined IHG Group.



Free Meeting Package

Swissotel Beijing Hong Kong Macau Center is pleased to offer a free meeting package to conference and delegation participants. The package includes accommodations in the Classic Room, buffet breakfast and service, a full-day meeting package including morning and afternoon coffee breaks, international buffet lunch, audio-visual equipment, 10 complimentary name cards, use of the main meeting and lunch rooms and butler service. You must book at least 10 rooms. This offer is not valid in conjunction with other promotions.

Where: Swissotel Beijing Hong Kong Macau Center, 2 Chaoyangmen Bei Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: Until September 29

Cost: 700 yuan per night (single room); 900 yuan per night (double room)
Tel: 6553 2288 – 2263

Regent Beijing welcomes president of Turkey – China Friendship Association

Diderik Van Regemorter, managing director of The Regent Beijing, welcomed Kemal Baytas-president of the Turkey-China Friendship Association. By invite of CPAFFC, Baytas and his delegation visited several cities in China to learn more about local culture and further the friendship and good relations between Turkey and China.

(By Sun Feng)

Aviation

Air France KLM's environmental strategy rewarded

Air France-KLM was honored by Airline Business in the Environment category of the Airline Strategy Awards. The group's was awarded for its strategy, which places the environment at the heart of its concerns and development. The jury praised the quality of the group's communication on the subject of sustainable development and its participation in programs to improve air traffic management and compensation of CO₂ emissions.

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

A run for the money, nothing to do with money

By Jin Zhu

My cousin Jennifer Liu is a college student majoring in medical science. About one month ago before the beginning of the summer vacation, she asked me to help her find an internship.

Initially, I thought I was not the right person to help her, since working for media leaves me few connections in the medical community.

"I am not looking for an internship at a hospital or medical research institution. Actually, I hope to improve my English during this summer vacation," Jennifer said.

As a medical student studying in one of the top schools in the country, she told me that students who are very good at English can benefit from their language skills: so many classes are taught in English; professors usually assign students with a good English level to help them sort out materials in English; after reading many original medical texts, students can improve more so than they would reading the translations alone.

In this case, the task seemed easier for me. One month later, I found volunteer position for her in the Beijing branch of a foreign charity.

Before bringing her to meet the person in charge, I told her that since the work place is so far away from downtown, she would need to get up much earlier than before and work hard. Also, as a volunteer, she would not earn a salary, but a subsidy of 300 yuan every month.

"No problem. I am not expecting to earn money from it,"



I WANT YOUR MONEY

doubt that I will learn much from the job since I already learned a new expression even before I started work," Jennifer said.

has been widely used in many fields, such as elections and business, when someone has to try his best," Joshua said.

"Evidently I misunderstood Mitchell. There is no doubt that I will learn much from the job since I already learned a new expression even before I started work," Jennifer said.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

To build a harmonious, I share your civilization traffic

By Tiffany Tan

A Chinglish sign this complex does not come our way every day. It is in the same stratosphere as "Please the careful clothes mishandle flowers you the lipstick" and "After first under on, do riding with civility." There are gems in an age when Chinglish signs have a shoot-to-kill order from authorities.

This one particularly reflects the logic leaders use in trying to encourage people to become better citizens. However, one of my Chinese colleagues however said "there is no logic" to the sign, after she squinted at it for a few minutes.

Still, she helped me decode it. The first part says, "Let us build together a harmonious Chaoyang"; the next says, "We will enjoy a civilized traffic situ-



tion." We came to the conclusion the banner seems to be saying this: Driving in a civilized manner – by obeying traffic rules – will help create a better Chaoyang District. I cannot agree more.

I found this sign inside the 798 Art District, facing a short section of train tracks with a parked train. Is this banner part of some larger art work? In this part of town, you never know.

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week.

1. The threatened species

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): In environmental science terminology, species on the verge of extinction are generally described as "endangered species," rather than "threatened species." Species in danger of extinction are "endangered"; if we say they are "threatened," the meaning becomes blurred. What does "threatened" mean? How are they threatened? By a worsening environment? By a deteriorating habitat? By poaching? The meaning of "threatened" is different from that of "endangered," and it is wrong to use the former in this case.

Native speaker Penny Turner (PT): "Threatened species" is defined in ecology as "organisms at risk of becoming endangered," which means they are not yet endangered. "Threatened" and "endangered" do not belong in the same category; the warning bells for the latter sound much louder. But on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) List of Threatened Species, one of the most well-known classification systems for organisms threatened with extinction, the categories Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN) and Vulnerable (VU), fall under the broader notion of "threatened." The list has nine categories; to find out more about them, visit iucnredlist.org.

2. Grandma van Gogh is born.

ZS: This one's grammar is perfect, yet it is not rhetorically refined. What is the problem with so short a sentence? The writer was thinking in Chinese. The statement's English equivalent lacks power and force. It is too straightforward.

Let us see what happens if we change just the word order. After making a brief introduction of how the subject, an old village lady, combines her memory of the good old country life with her passion for strong color, the writer concludes with great excitement: And born here is Grandma van Gogh. The sentence structure was merely inverted, yet it resulted in much greater rhetorical power. This relates to one's sense of the language and mastery of rhetoric. In English, the appropriate use of an inverted word order can make your sentences more forceful.

PT: Rhetoric is the art of speaking or writing effectively, and is not something a person can buy off a shelf. It is honed through years of study, practice and self-improvement. Professor Zhu suggested a way to rewrite the statement to generate more impact. Another option is to say, "And Grandma van Gogh was born," or "And thus was born Grandma van Gogh." The key to improving one's writing, I believe, is to read a lot, and of course, to write.

3. Magnets for up and coming talent

ZS: Talent may mean a special, natural ability: The singer is a real talent. Here, "talent" refers to something concrete, indicating a person or persons with talent. It is countable and thus may take a plural form. When it signifies an abstract or collective noun, it does not take a plural form. Take this example: She has a talent for music. If a man has a talent and cannot use it, he has failed. Another example: to introduce new talent on stage. Here, "new talent" indicates a group of people, specifically, a group of talents. In conclusion, the phrase in question can be written in two correct ways: "Magnets for up and coming talent" or "Magnets for the up and coming talents."

PT: "Up and coming" is an idiom that refers to a person or thing that is beginning to achieve success or popularity. In this sense, "talent" refers to something concrete; I do not think it can mean anything abstract. If the subject is one person, you can say, "Magnets for the up and coming talent"; if it is more than one, "Magnets for up and coming talents" or "Magnets for the up and coming talents."



The Soloist (2009)

Scene 1

(Steve Lopez meets Nathaniel Ayers the very first time when the homeless man is playing a violin with two strings beside a statue of Beethoven.)

Steve Lopez (S): Stevie Wonder fan?

Nathaniel Ayers (N): My Cherie Amour is the song of my life.

S: Signed, sealed, delivered.

N: But you really shouldn't write on a violin like that because you have to treat a violin like a child, you have to protect it.

S: You only got two strings.

N: All I want to do is play music, and here's the problem that I'm having right here. This one's gone, this one's gone, this little one's **out of commission** (1). But you get that in Cleveland public schools. A lot of military statues in Cleveland. A very military-oriented city.

S: Is that where you're from?

N: You're not gonna get musicians **on parade** (2) there. You got Severance Hall there. You have The Music Settlement. Ohio State University. Whereas in Los Angeles, you have Los Angeles PD, you have LA Times, you have Los Angeles Lakers. Those are armies, too. Military regimentation, experimentation, Roman gable, Roman Catholicism, Colonel Sanders.

But this guy right here is the **quarterback with the orchestra** (3). Now the cello could back this guy with the same moves, but the cello can't be concert master. No. He **leads out** (4), this was Itzhak Perlman, Jascha Heifetz.

You can't play music



in the winter in Cleveland because of the ice and the snow. That's why I prefer Los Angeles to Beethoven City, because it never rains in Southern California, and if it does, all I have to do is just go in the tunnel. I could play to my heart's content. I'm **flabbergasted** (5) about the statue. Aren't you flabbergasted about this?

S: Anyway, nice to meet you.

N: Do you have any idea how it got here?

S: No.

N: Maybe they dropped it off late at night. 'Cause it's just astonishing to sit here for hours and just ... Just gaze at it. It ... It just **blows me away** (6).

S: No idea.

N: It really blows me away that someone as great as Beethoven was the leader of Los Angeles.

S: Yeah. I'm Steve Lopez, LA Times.

N: Lopez, L-O-P-E-Z?

S: Yeah.

N: Lopez, Los Angeles Times. Mr. Lopez.

S: What's your name?

N: Nathaniel Anthony Ayers Junior.



Movie of the week

This movie is based on a true story about a homeless man in Los Angeles. Downey Jr. and Foxx play a newspaper columnist and homeless man who come together in a most unusual way. Both actors play their characters to near perfection and the film takes its time in developing their relationship. It is great to see director Joe Wright telling a contemporary tale just as effectively as he has in previous works.

The film makes one wonder how many other Nathaniel Ayers (Foxx) are lurking out there on the street? The film shows what can happen when just one Nathaniel is found after being lost for so many years. There's no sugarcoating. He does not magically get better and rejoin mainstream society. Instead, the mainstream accepts him for what he is and what he offers and begins integrating him as best it can.

Synopsis

Steve Lopez is a disenchanted journalist stuck in a dead-end job. His marriage to a fellow journalist having recently come to an end, Steve is wandering through Los Angeles' Skid Row when he notices a bedraggled figure playing a two-stringed violin. The figure in question is Ayers, a man whose promising career in music was cut short due to a debilitating bout with mental illness. The more Lopez learns about Ayers, the greater his respect grows for the troubled soul. How could a man with such remarkable talent wind up living on the streets instead of performing on-stage with a symphony orchestra? Later, as Lopez embarks on a quixotic quest to help Ayers pull his life together and launch a career in music, he gradually comes to realize that it is not Ayers whose life is being transformed, but his own.

Scene 2

(Lopez runs Ayers' story in the paper and the two men grow closer as friends. However Ayers still chooses to stay the night on the street.)

N: Do you think of writers often, Mr. Lopez? Do you think of writers the way I think about musicians?

S: I write for a living, and it's not like it used to be.

N: I love thinking about musicians. I imagine Beethoven and Mozart in that window where the light is, and they just hunger and they thirst like we do. It's angelic. I believe these children of God are gonna be okay tonight. They're gonna sleep and dream as humans do.

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in

heaven. Give us this day our daily bread... Just keep it coming. There's plenty. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lopez's voiceover: I knew only part of his story. I knew him playing the violin on a dairy crate in the morning sun, suspended somewhere between boy genius and lost traveler. Every night, my friend Nathaniel **tucks his instruments away** (7) and lays his head among the predators and hustlers, among fallen drunks sprawled in the streets, as rats the size of meatloaves **dart out of** (8) the drains to **feed off** (9) the squalor.

N: Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever.

Vocabulary

- out of commission:** not operating properly; out of order
- on parade:** on display, especially in public
- quarterback with the orchestra:** a creative way of saying "conductor"
- lead out:** to guide someone away
- flabbergasted:** dumbfounded
- blow someone away:** to astonish, overwhelm
- tuck away:** to store something in a safe place
- dart out of:** to move quickly out of something
- feed off something:** to subsist on something

